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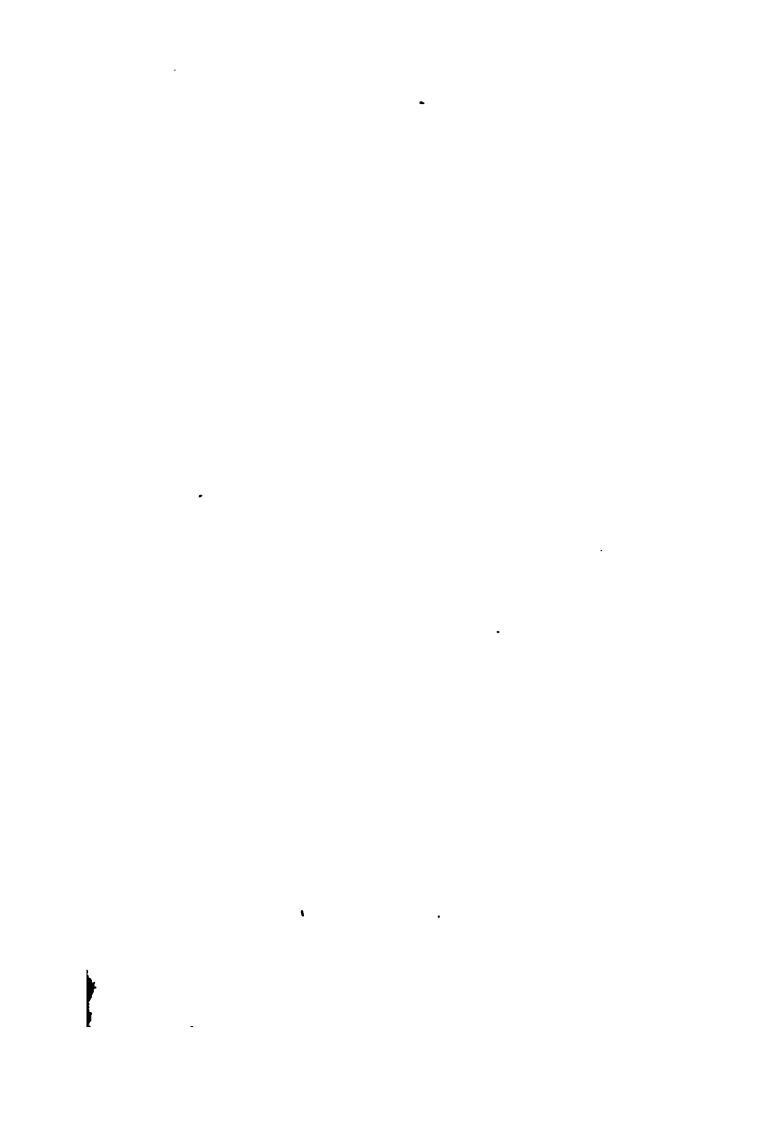
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CHARLES DALLAWAY,

OR

THE RESTLESS MAN.



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LONDON:

JOHN AND CHARLES MOZLEY, PATERNOSTER ROW ;

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CHARLES DALLAWAY.

CHAPTER I.

“ and still before their way
A foggy mist had covered all the land.”

The Fairy Queen.

“My good fellow!” exclaimed Charles Dallaway impatiently to Richard Morgan, as he stood waiting for customers one morning behind the counter in “Smith and Fincham’s” shop; “one might almost as well try to reason with a woman, as reason with you!”

“Take care what you say!” answered Richard Morgan, who was carefully arranging an embroidered white muslin over a pink glazed calico, “and don’t make impertinent remarks about women; I’d undertake to say there’s many a woman with a better understanding than some of us that think ourselves so wise!”

“You’ve been fortunate in your acquaintance,

Mr. Morgan: but I'm not going to waste my time talking about women: I only say, I might as well try to reason with a woman, as reason with you. No sooner have I knocked down all your arguments, and answered all your objections, and explained my plans, and made all clear, as I think; than you begin again with your 'imprudence,' and your 'inexperience,' and your this, that, and the other, just at the same place where you began before: so there's an end of the business. I shall look out amongst the rest of the men, and it's strange in a 'house,' like 'Smith and Fincham's,' the first house in Southbridge, if there isn't another man to be found with a little bit of an enterprising spirit, like myself."

"Stop, Mr. Dallaway;" (it was the fashion amongst the young men at Smith and Fincham's, to address each other as "Mr. So-and-so," whilst they were on duty at the shop;) "don't be so hasty—you won't give a man time to think.—It's always my way, before I make up my mind to engage in a thing, to think of all there is against it, as well as what there is ~~for~~ it. But I don't mean to say it's altogether a bad idea; for it's quite true, as you say, that you and I can't have served in this shop these ten years, without gaining a considerable knowledge as to what business is in the mercery line. But then,

it's a serious thing to risk so much of one's savings;—no doubt you feel that, the same as I do."

It happened that Mr. Dallaway felt no such thing; for a certain weakness of his in favour of chains and studs, and such like adornments, (little eloquent tokens of the sincere love he felt for himself,) stood sadly in the way of his laying anything by. He did not, however, think it desirable at that moment, to plead guilty of empty pockets; it would have thwarted his scheme altogether; so he boldly protested "he should feel no fear whatever in risking every farthing he had."

Charles Dallaway had shown discrimination in wishing to have Richard Morgan for his partner in a new line of business in which he was anxious to embark; for he not only knew, 'or at least strongly suspected,' that besides saving money of his own, he had come into a little more by the death of his mother; but he knew too that Richard Morgan was a thorough good man of business, in spite of his "slowness," as Charles Dallaway called it; though this "slowness" was, in fact, nothing more or less, than proper and necessary caution.

Richard Morgan still looked thoughtful, and declared at last, he would decide upon nothing *without consulting* "Smith and Fincham."

"It would be the proper thing to do, I suppose," said Charles Dallaway, "and I've no objection to speak to Mr. Smith; but if you want to see Fincham, you may go by yourself;—he's too much of a pattern of perfection, to suit my taste. All you've got to do, is to copy him, and you'll be sure to do right;—that's the beginning and the end of all he says."

"I should prefer, myself, speaking to Mr. Smith," said Richard Morgan.

"And if we do ask to speak to Mr. Smith," continued Charles Dallaway, "he won't hear a word we have to say, till he's told us for the hundredth time, exactly how many years he's been an invalid, and what the doctor allows him to eat, and what he may drink, and what he may not eat and drink, and all the rest of it."

"But I like old Mr. Smith, he's such a genuine kind-hearted old man," said Richard Morgan. "If I'm not mistaken he's down at the shop to-day, and we could speak to him in the counting-house; let's go, now; the shop is not very full yet, and we shouldn't be long."

"It's too early for the 'fashionables' at present," said Charles Dallaway, looking down the whole length of the long, handsome shop; "but you'll see by three o'clock, if there isn't a regular crowd here. I shan't be sorry, I know, when we shut up this evening; my head aches already

as if it would split. But now, we may as well just see whether Mr. Smith's in the counting-house."

"You may go in first," said Richard Morgan, dropping behind; "it's your plan, and you may explain it."

Charles Dallaway knocked at the door; but felt strongly inclined to draw back and leave Richard Morgan to go in alone, as a voice from within, speaking very much through the nose of the person it belonged to, answered with a prolonged "Come in," which sounded very much as if it meant in plain English, "I wish you'd keep out, and not interrupt me in the middle of my accounts."

"A pretty thing you've got us in for," said Charles Dallaway, as he laid hold of the handle of the door; "that's the perfect Fincham's voice, and no mistake."

But having knocked, and been so encouragingly told to "come in," there was now no possibility of drawing back; and as Charles Dallaway opened the door, his worst fears were confirmed; for instead of seeing Mr. Smith's venerable white head, they were greeted by a hasty glance through Mr. Fincham's spectacles, from those little, sharp grey eyes of his, as he silently motioned to them to sit down, whilst he continued in a loud whisper—"and eight are sixty, and four are sixty-four, and two are sixty-six, and five are seventy-

one;—brought over, seventy-one pounds, nine and sixpence.—“There now,” said he, (as he wrote down the sum at the head of the next column, and stuck his pen in the inkstand,)—“now I’m ready to attend to you;—but you see, when I work, I work in earnest; and I think you’ll find it a good rule through life to do as I do, and—”

“I beg your pardon, Sir,” began Charles Dallaway, “I’m afraid we are come at an inconvenient time;—I wouldn’t interrupt you when you’re busy, on any account; we wanted to consult either you or Mr. Smith about a little business—but your time is precious, Sir;—it will do quite as well if we walk over to Rose Villas this evening, and see Mr. Smith at his own house;—we shall be glad of the walk.”

“You can do so if you please, Mr. Dallaway; it will be just the same thing; Mr. Smith and I have but one mind; in fact, all the years we’ve been in business together, I may say with truth, we’ve moved together in a most agreeable manner.—It has always been my maxim through life, to—”

“Our little business is of no importance, Sir, I assure you,” said Charles Dallaway, rising as he spoke; “I see you’re very busy, and we should be ashamed to interrupt you any longer;” and so saying, he secured a hasty retreat, followed by Richard Morgan; leaving Mr. Fincham

to the undisturbed enjoyment of solitude and his account-books.

"It was you that got us into the scrape, Mr. Morgan," said Charles Dallaway, as he shut the door, "and if I hadn't shown great presence of mind, we shouldn't have come out of it so well as we did,—as it was, we narrowly escaped having to listen to two rules for our conduct in life;—I really couldn't stand it!"

But both young men were now called away to attend upon different customers; the shop was filling very fast, and for a few hours there was neither time nor opportunity for talking. They were long, worrying hours for a man with a headache to endure; and Charles Dallaway thought the ladies were more than usually fanciful and hard to please that afternoon, and the air of the shop seemed more than usually heated and oppressive.

But at last the fashionable ladies had all disappeared, and were succeeded by a different class of customers, requiring a very different description of articles; customers, who in their humility, did not venture to the farther end of the shop, like the fashionable ladies; and who were waited on by inexperienced beginners. Customers they were, who bought prints and coarse calicoes, instead of silks and velvets; and looked twice at a *penny* before they spent it; and the pale thin

faces of many amongst them, spoke of silent toil and suffering, as they deliberated anxiously whether to get two or three cheap articles, which would look nice at first, but could not last long; or one, more expensive one, which would "do more service." It's hard to make a choice, when there are five or six young ones at home, besides "father," all wanting to be kept tidy, and all wearing and tearing their things faster than they can be made and patched up.

But as these customers did not require the attendance of experienced men like Mr. Morgan and Mr. Dallaway, (who were lounging at the other end of the shop,) Mr. Dallaway's thoughts again recurred to the theme of his morning discourse.

"Well, Mr. Morgan, when you're ready, I'll walk with you down to the reading-room, and just look at the papers one minute; and then, if you're in the same mind, we'll walk over to Mr. Smith's.—Oh, joyful sound!" he exclaimed, "they're now putting up the shutters;—I don't believe there's any music to equal it;"—and taking a glance at the long looking-glass, he arranged his hair a little, and having carefully put on his hat, sallied forth with Mr. Morgan, (who felt less solicitude on that point,) into the cool evening air.

No one knows the sweetness of that moment—

no one can guess the reviving influence upon mind and body, of the first breath of fresh, open air, that has not felt what it is to be shut up, hour after hour, perhaps for twelve long hours, in the close atmosphere, it may be, of a court of law, it may be, of an office, it may be, of a milliner's room, or it may be, of a shop. And so now, after the first, long, free breath of fresh evening air, both young men felt their spirits begin to mount at once, like the quicksilver in a weather-glass before fine weather.

"I shan't be a minute," said Charles Dallaway, as he sprang up the reading-room staircase, leaving Richard Morgan, who was less of a politician, to turn over in his own mind the object of the errand on which they were bound.

As they presently after started on their walk together, one might have doubted, to judge by their looks, whether they were ever intended to be partners in any undertaking; the two men looked so essentially different. Even in his every-day dress, which, according to the rule of the shop, was a plain black coat, and black neck-tie, Charles Dallaway had always something smart about his appearance; the tie was always so carefully put on, and his hat so well brushed; but on Sundays, when Charles's native taste was uncontrolled, it was apt to develop itself in large plaids, and coats of an extra-fashionable cut.

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He was about five feet seven in height, and well built; and was altogether a good-looking little man, with a pair of restless dark eyes, and well-turned features.

Richard Morgan had the advantage of Charles Dallaway in height, by about four inches; his figure was large and rather clumsy; his features, too, were heavy; but there was something particularly prepossessing in the sincere expression of his countenance, and the gentleness of his manner. His heart, too, was as kind and as gentle as his manner, and he was no less sincere than he looked.

But the very goodness of Richard's heart sometimes led him into making great mistakes; for he was apt to think that other people were all as honest and sincere, as he knew he was himself. He was rarely known to be out of humour; and now, the beauty of the midsummer evening had put him into higher spirits than usual; so, as they paced along together to Rose Villas, which were nearly two miles out of Southbridge, he felt inclined to listen with more complacency to Charles Dallaway's oft-repeated plan.

“You see, my good fellow,” Charles Morgan, “for the first two or three years we would be travelling gentlemen.”

“Or travelling mercers?” suggested Richard Morgan.

•

Charles did not think it worth while to adopt Richard's amendment, but continued—"Smith and Fincham would be glad to get rid of what's on hand, in that way, when they take in stock at the change of the seasons ; and a monstrous pleasant life you'd find it, compared with standing behind the counter all day, and wearing out our lives to put the money into other people's pockets."

"Have you attempted to make any estimate as to what capital we should require to start with?"

"Oh, just enough to buy the 'trap' and the horse ; that'll be rather a pull, to be sure ; but as for the rest, I expect Smith and Fincham would let us have what we want out of their old stock for a very small sum ; they'll be glad to get rid of it, and country people will be just as well pleased as if the things were 'new in' last season ; perhaps Smith and Fincham might even be satisfied with a per centage on what we dispose of."

"Well, we'll hear what Mr. Smith says ;—but I can tell you, I don't intend to go scampering over the country like mad all my life ;—I wouldn't undertake it at all, unless I thought we should be able, before long, to put enough together to set up business somewhere. We might begin in a small way, you know, at Millham ; it's quite out of Southbridge, as you may say, being

on the other side of the bridge. I believe there are old people living that remember when Millham and Southbridge were a mile apart, and now they are almost like one."

"My grandmother remembers it," said Charles Dallaway; "she lives at Millham, you know."

"There's no mercer's shop there yet," continued Richard Morgan, "and we might soon get a connexion there."

"Not a bad idea," answered Charles; "and by-and-by, if we get on, we might open a larger shop; and by the time Smith and Fincham retire, we might even afford, perhaps, to take a shop in the town—we'll be the tip-top house in Southbridge one of these days! And who knows," he continued after a minute's silence, "when we've gained the confidence of the public, whether we might not carry on a bank at the back of the shop, like old Trueman at Heathershot?—and then in time we might sink the mercer altogether, and turn regular bankers; such things have been done before now."

"Oh yes," answered Richard, with a serious comic smile, which always puzzled Charles when he observed it; "and then, of course, we'd each have a country house, and perhaps be returned for the city some day;" and still that ambiguous smile was on Richard's face—if Charles had not felt sure that he was very much Richard's supe-

rior, he would have thought he was laughing at him. "I'll leave that honour to you, Dallaway," said Richard.

"I shall come in on the liberal interest, you'll see," Charles answered; "and when I make a speech at the election dinner, won't I tell the natives of Southbridge a few things they didn't know before about the rights of man!" And Charles was just ~~t~~rying to fancy how he should feel when he was chaired, as they reached Mr. Smith's garden gate.

As they opened the gate and stood waiting for a minute to know whether Mr. Smith was visible, they could not help thinking what a happy old gentleman he must be, with such a sweet-smelling garden, and such a snug-looking house, with the windows open down to the ground, looking out on the sun-set sky. It was between eight and nine on a midsummer evening, and the sun, which had just gone down, had left the sky lighted up with a golden glory; it was one of those peaceful sunsets which produce a forgetting of all care.

The first glance of Mr. Smith, as they were shown into the room where he was sitting, confirmed the idea of his being, not only a very happy, but a very comfortable old gentleman. His dress ~~was~~ as a sleek-looking suit of black, which *contrasted well with the silvery whiteness of his*

hair. His complexion was of a sallow tinge; his eyebrows were bushy, and a pair of dark grey eyes looked out from under them with a kindly look, as if Mr. Smith was happy himself, and wished he could make every one else the same. He was sitting in an easy-chair, with his legs supported on one of those machines which have appropriated to themselves the enviable faculty of bestowing the two great blessings of life on the privileged owner—Mr. Smith's legs were resting on an "ease-and-comfort"—and on the table by Mr. Smith's side, there was a glass of something hot; something rather dark coloured it was, with a spoon in it.

"Jane," said Mr. Smith to the servant, in an under voice, "bring some glasses." And whilst Charles Dallaway apologized for intruding on Mr. Smith at so late an hour, and Mr. Smith begged them to be seated, and Jane was fetching the glasses, Richard Morgan had an opportunity of admiring the family portraits which adorned the walls. "That old gentleman that hangs over the fire-place, in the reddish brown coat and stiff wig, looking very much as if he was cut out of wood, must be Mr. Smith's father," thought Richard; "and the old lady opposite to him, with a gold chain and a turban, and a red gown with a lace collar, must be his mother; it can't be his wife," thought Richard, "seeing Mr.

Smith is an old bachelor ;” and under the large picture that hung over the fire-place, was a portrait of a young lady with yellow curls and blue eyes, which Richard looked at with particular interest, as he remembered hearing that Mr. Smith had been crossed in love in his young days, and he felt very glad, though a little surprised perhaps, to see how few traces of this early sorrow were left behind on Mr. Smith’s cheerful countenance ; and he wondered how it was that Mr. Smith should still be living and looking so comfortable, instead of having died of a broken heart.

“ Oh !” said Mr. Smith, “ it’s impossible, I know, for you to be spared till the evening ; you’ve had a beautiful evening for your walk, though ; a little business, you say ?—but now take a glass of wine first, Mr. Dallaway ;—Mr. Morgan, a glass of wine ?”

Now this good Mr. Smith, like other people that have no real cares, had a few little imaginary ones ; and one of Mr. Smith’s chief cares was the state of his health, which, nevertheless, either in consequence of the care he took of it, or, it might be, in spite of it, was very seldom otherwise than good. It was a luxury which Mr. Smith allowed himself now and then, to send for Dr. Clarke, the first physician in South-bridge, and talk over his “ symptoms.”—“ Now

my young friends," continued Mr. Smith, "you'll excuse my not taking a glass of wine with you; but, you see, Dr. Clarke thinks I had better only take a little wine with my dinner, 'and then, Mr. Smith,' he said, 'if you feel sinking at all before you go to bed, take about three quarters of a tumbler of hot water, to about three table-spoonfuls of brandy, and sleep in the country, (which I have done for years,) and I'll ensure you a good night's rest.'"

Richard Morgan looked attentively at Mr. Smith as he spoke, and appeared edified; but Charles Dallaway turned his head a little, and appeared to be studying one of the family portraits very hard, that Mr. Smith might not see the smile which he could not quite control.

"'Diet, Mr. Smith,' says Dr. Clarke, 'that's the great thing,' continued the good old gentleman; "he has no objection," he says, "to my taking a little bitter ale, but I mustn't drink water; I mustn't drink toast-and-water, nor barley-water; and, I mustn't eat veal—stay, I'm making a mistake, I may eat a little veal curry; and I may eat beef; I may eat mutton; and lamb; and I may eat fish and poultry."

Even Richard's gravity was sorely tried. "But now," said Mr. Smith, "this little business of yours—what can it be? You would have told *me if there was* anything the matter; but my

nerve are always easily upset, and when I saw you come in, I felt quite alarmed ; I expected to hear Mr. Fincham was ill, or the shop was on fire, or something. But what is it, now ?" said he, looking at Richard.

"I must leave Mr. Dallaway to explain, Sir ; it's more his plan than mine—but we thought we should be glad of your advice about it."

And then Charles Dallaway explained the whole to Mr. Smith, and wound up with the proposal about disposing of some of the old stock.

Mr. Smith must consult Mr. Fincham, he said ; but he saw no objection to the plan, except that they should be sorry to lose two such valuable young men out of the shop. "Something in view you don't tell me about, I dare say ; going to be married, I suppose, eh ? Prudence, remember, prudence !"

Richard Morgan turned very red, and suddenly dropped his walking-stick ; unfortunately it made a great noise in falling, which attracted Charles Dallaway's attention, and made Richard redder than ever.

"Do ring the bell ; may I trouble you Mr. Dallaway ?" said Mr. Smith. "Jane," he said, as she appeared at the door, "I think I had better have the window shut—I'm getting a chill ; and perhaps, Mr. Morgan, you would

allow her to take your walking-stick; you'll excuse me, I'm sure, but my nerves are so easily shattered. And, Jane," he said, calling her back, as she was shutting the door, "I think I had better have another blanket on to-night. Excuse me," he added, addressing his guests, "but I'm obliged to speak of these things before I forget them."

And now the young men rose to take leave, and departed with loads of good wishes and blessings, and plenty of good advice from the kind-hearted Mr. Smith.

Things were becoming serious now the first step in the business had been taken; and both walked on in silence for a time, as they watched the large, red, summer moon, rising rapidly above the horizon, and then turn gradually of a glowing golden colour, as she mounted up the cloudless sky.

"Morgan," said Charles Dallaway, "look there—that's a good omen—only look, there's not a cloud to be seen!"

The silence was broken, and the two now talked fast and earnestly of the subject which filled their thoughts, till they were within one or two fields of Southbridge.

"And now," said Richard, "look up again; what do you say to the omen now?"

Charles looked up; there were clouds coming

up like an army, and gathering fast round the solitary moon; nearer and nearer they came; but she threw a silvery light over them as they approached her, and not only made the clouds look beautiful, but Richard thought she looked more beautiful herself, than when she was a solitary wanderer in the sky.

"What do you want to make me look at the clouds for?" said Charles Dallaway, impatiently. "I only believe in good omens."

Richard thought omens were stuff, so he still gazed up at the moon in the midst of the clouds. "It's just like a good man in the midst of trouble," thought he: but the clouds passed away as Richard watched them, and the moon shone out with double glory; "and when the trouble is past away," thought Richard, "a good man seems only better than he did before."

The next day Mr. Smith lost no time in communicating with Mr. Fincham on the subject which Charles Dallaway, and it must be confessed Richard Morgan too, had now so much at heart; and after due deliberation, Mr. Fincham, who "always moved with Mr. Smith in a most agreeable manner," announced that they would be happy to further the plan, by allowing their old stock to be disposed of in the manner proposed.

The travelling speculation was not to com-

mence till the following spring? so Charles tried hard to save a little money in the mean time; and as he was determined to do the thing in good style, he succeeded, by great self-denial, in putting by nearly the whole of two quarters' pay. The time, however, drew on, and it became necessary, Mr. Dallaway said, as he and Richard Morgan were together one evening at the reading-room, "to decide on the kind of 'trap.'"

"And the kind of animal," suggested Richard: "dogs four in hand, or a donkey *tandem*?"

"I mean to have a good-looking horse, or have nothing to do with the concern," said Mr. Dallaway; "and I mean," said he, as if asking Richard's opinion was quite out of the question, "to look out for a neat dog-cart, that will just carry the goods underneath, and not look like anything particular. Here's the very 'thing,'" said he, as he looked down the advertisements in a newspaper he held in his hand. "'To be sold; a very handsome traveller's dog-cart, being very roomy, and very light' (just the thing," he said, looking at Richard Morgan), 'built upon the most modern principle. Cost ('ah! that's the question,' interrupted Richard), nineteen guineas a twelvemonth ago.'" Richard looked alarmed:

"Just listen," said Charles Dallaway—"price of the phaeton at the present time, ten guineas; we must look after that. And here," he con-

tinued, looking down the next column, as if the two were meant to go together—"here's 'to be sold, by the owner, (a tradesman,) a bay horse, for twelve pounds, including harness, is a good, useful, sound-constituted animal, doing constant work for the last two years without illness; about fifteen hands high, and is fast and quiet in saddle and harness. A trial allowed.' That sounds like the sort of thing," said he.

"Fast and quiet, too!" said Richard; "two qualities so rarely combined!"

"I shall write to my friend Tom Evans, in London," said Charles, "and tell him to go and look at the trap, and the horse too; I assure you, you may rely on his judgment."

The letter was written forthwith, and the bargain was effected without loss of time; and Richard Morgan and Charles Dallaway could scarcely believe the dog-cart and the horse were really their own, when Tom Evans, who kindly undertook to drive them down, pulled up one day before the door of Charles's lodgings.

"The harness is the worst part of the set-out," said Charles Dallaway. "I should have liked a new patent harness most uncommonly."

But as Tom Evans, who came from London, "saw no fault to find with the harness," Charles felt more satisfied. Tom Evans told Charles, moreover, they were lucky to get such a trap as

that for ten guineas; "but you must just see and have your names painted on," he added, "so as not to pay duty."

"What a horrid nuisance!" said Charles Dallaway; "I never thought of that."

"Why surely you'd never mind that?" said Tom Evans.

"I don't much fancy," said Charles, "having all the little brats in every village we pass through, shouting one's name after one. Morgan, do you mind?"

"No, I don't mind," said Richard.

But Charles stamped his foot in a rage, and said he never would have his name painted behind the dog-cart for every one to see, and he supposed he must give up the plan.

"Well," suggested the acute Tom Evans, "what do you say to having it painted on here, at the side, just behind the wheel; who'd be the wiser?"

This calmed Charles's mind a little, and having ascertained from his experienced friend, the smallest possible sized letter that the law would allow, he at last submitted to his fate, and proceeded in the dog-cart with Tom Evans to the coach-builders, that he might himself give minute and particular directions about this delicate business.

CHAPTER II.

"When Adam dived and Eve span,
Where was then the gentleman?"

Old Saw.

"COME, let's be off, Charles," said Richard, as he took his seat in the dog-cart, to make a start for the first time in the new line of business;—"Come, the horse won't stand;—you're as long settling yourself as a lady—what are you about?"

To Richard's infinite amusement he discovered that Charles was very carefully arranging a smart new railway plaid, to hang over the side of the dog-cart so as to conceal the objectionable fact of the names being painted outside.

"There," said Charles, seizing the reins—"it's a gentlemanly sort of a turn out, now!" and as he spoke, he took a glance at Richard's dress, to see whether he did credit to it. "Richard, why don't you get a new coat?—you might pass for my grandfather in that long-tailed affair of yours; it's old-fashioned to a degree."

"My coat?" said Richard, looking rather annoyed;—"old-fashioned?—I didn't know it was."

"You never see a gentleman now with a long coat like that," said Charles.

"It will do very well for me, I dare say," Richard answered; "I don't like to look too smart, I should only feel like a sham. I can't carry it off, you see, Charles, as you do."

Charles looked gratified.—"Like a sham?" said he inquiringly. He was disposed to take Richard's speech as a compliment, but at the same time he could not help feeling it was a doubtful one.

"Why," said Richard, "if anybody was to judge by my dress that I was an independent gentleman, and then find out the mistake afterwards, I should feel rather taken down."

"But surely," Charles answered, "you like to look like a gentleman?—There's something in the very name of a gentleman, or a lady, that delights my ear; I *must* say I like to look like a gentleman." And Charles looked down at his own dress with satisfaction.

"Well, I don't know that I care so much about the look," said Richard, "but certainly I do like, myself, to feel like one."

"But if you feel like one, you'll look like one too, most likely," said Charles.

"I don't know that," answered Richard. "I believe there are many people that feel like a gentleman, that don't look like one. Look at

Squire Houghton over there;—who would ever say he looked like a gentleman? and yet, to my knowledge, there isn't a man in all the country round, that's more of a gentleman, nor one that has a kinder, or a nobler heart than he has. It's my belief you may find people in all ranks of life that feel like gentlemen and ladies, that don't look like it."

"People after my old grandmother's sort, you mean," said Charles; "I'll be bound to say there isn't a lady in all the land with nicer feelings and nicer manners than she has."

"Ah, she's a nice-looking old lady," said Richard; "she lives over at Millham, doesn't she? I wish some day when you're going there you'd take me to see her; do you think she'd object?"

"She would be very much flattered by your condescension, I'm sure," said Charles.

"My condescension! The condescension would be all on the other side, I should say, for an old lady like her to notice a young fellow of my age."

"Come, you're not so very young, Richard; how many summers may you have seen?" asked Charles, quoting a phrase from the last novel he read.

"I'm twenty-seven," said Richard; "and your grandmother, I've heard you say, is upwards of

seventy; I'm young, I suppose, compared with her."

"Ah, but it wasn't age I was thinking about," said Charles, "when I spoke of condescension. You know my grandmother (I don't mind saying so to you) is quite in humble life; but," he added with real feeling, "that makes no difference to me; for she's always been just as if she was my own mother; she took to me soon after I was born, when I was left without either father or mother. I wouldn't let the week go by without going over to see her—no, that I wouldn't! She's pretty fond of me, too, I can tell you; and as I said just now, there isn't a lady in all the land with nicer manners, or nicer feelings than she has."

"Why being born in humble life is no reason that I know of," said Richard, "why people's minds and manners should be coarse and vulgar."

"Of course it's not," said Charles, with a flourish of his whip; "but mind, Richard; I'm going to make a bargain with you: if I take you to see my grandmother, will you take me to see your pretty cousins, some day? that will be fair you know."

Richard turned very red; but fortunately Charles's whip got into a knot just then, and it passed unobserved. Richard felt a strong inclination to say "No;" but there was no good

excuse to be made, so he was obliged to answer quietly, "Very well, I will."

"One of your cousins is a very pretty girl, Richard; one of nature's fair flowers;—a lady-like looking girl too; she hasn't a bad idea of dressing herself either."

Richard here gave such a desperate kick at the splashing-board, that Charles exclaimed, "Hallo, my good fellow, you'll frighten the horse!"

Richard felt decidedly irritable, and inclined to pick a quarrel with Charles. "I wish," said he, "you would not be for ever talking about 'ladies and gentlemen,' as you are; it's of no use you know. Indeed, I think it's a kind of dishonesty for people to pretend to be more than they are."

"Why just now I thought you said," answered Charles, "that there might be gentlemen and ladies in all ranks of life?"

"I only said a man might have the feelings of a gentleman; I never said I should call myself a gentleman, nor try to look like one. I've a notion the people over the water laugh finely at us Englishmen for always pretending to be so grand; and though I don't much relish being laughed at by a parcel of Frenchmen, I must say I don't think they laugh without reason."

"Well, I think you're just contradicting your-

self, and what you said, just now," said Charles, looking rather sulky.

"No, I'm not; I only said a man might have the feelings of a gentleman in any rank of life, and I stick to what I said. Now what's your own opinion, Charles?" Richard continued, "and what is it, should you say, that makes a gentleman?—is it clean wristbands?"

"Certainly I should not call a man quite a gentleman with dirty ones," he said, looking down at his own with considerable satisfaction.

"Is it a good hat?" said Richard.

"Why that's a very necessary thing in a gentleman, too, I consider," said Charles, "as long as it's well brushed: this horrid dust will spoil my hat, and there's a shower coming presently," he said, looking up at the clouds, "and that will make an end of it."

"Is it a gold Albert chain?" asked the persevering Richard.

"Come, Richard, you're laughing at me, I know," said Charles, feeling painfully conscious that his own Albert chain was nothing but silver gilt; "that's not like you; what's come over you?"

Richard laughed; he was pleased to find he had succeeded in teasing Charles, and felt in a better humour again. "Well, now, Charles, you shall hear what I think," he said.—"I think

that man's a gentleman by nature—whatever he may be by rank—that knows how to behave himself to all men; that knows how to show kindness to those below him, without letting them feel there's any difference between them; and that knows how to show proper behaviour to those above him, without cringing, or losing his self-respect, and that has a kind word and a kind hand and heart for his equals, and that always shows gentleness and respect to women."

"When they're young and pretty, I suppose you mean," interrupted Charles.

"I mean, let them be young or old, or pretty or ugly, or what they will," answered Richard, indignantly; and then he added, "if a man can have clean wristbands and a good hat, all the better; but if he's such a one as I've been speaking of, he may be a gentleman at heart, though he only gets clean wristbands once a week, and wears his hat till there isn't a bit of nap left on it."

"But," said Charles, "you talk about those above us, Richard? What business has anybody to be above me? that's what I should like to know, when we were all made alike. Those Frenchmen, with their talk about equality—I don't think they're altogether in the wrong after all!"

"Ah, *they've* tried it, sure enough," said

Richard, "and you see they only shake down again the same as they were before; not to say they're worse off. There always will be a top and a bottom and a middle to everything—and it can't be helped—for my part, I'm very well pleased where I am."

"Well, I should like to be at the top," said Charles; "I'm such an ambitious fellow."

"You would rather be like the tip-top stone that finishes off the pinnacle, there," said Richard, as they drove past a village church, "than like the foundation stone, that's out of sight, and never was chipped into shape; I should like to know which is of most use, now?"

"You don't mean to say honestly then, Richard, that you feel no wish to rise, and you really would just as soon stay down at the bottom as be up at the top?"

"No, not that exactly," said Richard; "but its of no use to be in a hurry.—If you want to be at the top though, Charles, you must leave off talking about 'equality,' because where there's a top, there must be a bottom.—Now suppose, for the sake of the argument, a stone was to be taken out of the bottom part of a building, and chipped into shape, and made ornamental, and placed near the top, where everybody could see it; you see, Charles, there must be another *stone put in to fill up the place where this one*

came out; and I take it, that's pretty much how things are done in England; changes go on by degrees, when they do take place. So you see, if ever you get to the top, there must be another man to take the place you used to fill; and as for *equality*, you would be as far off as ever from the mark." And after thinking a minute, Richard added, "Of course I should like well enough to rise, if I ever have the opportunity; but I'm very well pleased where I am."

"You have no ambition like me," said Charles.

"And I don't suppose it makes you any happier," answered Richard; "but," he added, "I do feel a kind of ambition, too, I think."

"Why, Richard, I've hopes of you," interrupted Charles.

"I have such a love of order in me," continued Richard, "that I do feel an ambition to fit the place I'm in, exactly—that's my ambition! Order," repeated Richard, as if he was thinking aloud; "what beautiful thoughts that word calls up; I think I like it better than any word in the language!"

"Mr. Dallaway!" cried an unknown voice, as they drove in grand style through the village street. Of course Charles turned and looked round at the sound of his own name. "There's one of your wheels coming off, if you please, Mr. Dallaway!"

shouted a little urchin in a pinafore, standing at a safe distance from the whip, with a grin on his face.

That unfortunate railway plaid, it had slipped on one side! Charles took aim at the urchin with his whip, but he shyed out of the way as neatly as possible, and shouted out again, with a look of defiance, "there's one of your wheels coming off, Mr. Dallaway! Shall I go and fetch a man to mend it?" ●

"Here, hold the reins," cried Charles, in a rage; "let me just thrash that young monkey!"

But the young gentleman in the pinafore was off like a shot, and at the top of a tall tree by the road-side, before Charles could get near him; and there he sat, grinning, and shouting at the top of his voice, "Mr. Dallaway, shall I go and fetch somebody to mend your wheel?"

"Disgusting," said Charles, as he seated himself by Richard's side again; "I knew how it would be!" and he had the pleasure of hearing his name shouted after him all through the village, till he pulled up at the little country inn, with the sign of "The Royal Oak" swinging out over the road; a most unmistakeable sign it was, except that the oak bore a strong resemblance to a hay-rick; but there was King Charles the Second looking out between the boughs, with his

crown on, and a facetious expression of countenance, whilst the Parliamentary soldiers were galloping violently round and round the tree in search of him.

"I'll take the horse in, Charles," said Richard, "if you'll go and order dinner."

How Charles laughed when he came presently afterwards into the inn-yard, to find the inexperienced Richard making most violent efforts to take off the horse's collar, but all in vain.

"Here's the ostler out of the way," said Richard, looking quite in a fuss—"and the horse's collar won't come off—how it ever got on I can't think!" and then he tugged away again as if he would have pulled the horse's head off.

"Ha, ha!" cried Charles; "mind you don't pull his head off!" and the clever little man astonished the straightforward Richard by quietly turning the collar upside down, and slipping it over the horse's ears. "There! what do you think of that?" said he; "don't you think I shall do for an ostler when all trades fail?"

The travellers took an opportunity of informing themselves at the little inn, as to what prospect there was of doing a little business in that neighbourhood; and many were the lamentations they had to listen to, about the injury done to the inns on the road by the railways; and now that the *coaches* were driven off the road, and no

station within several miles, "it was no easy matter," the landlady said, "for folks to get over to Southbridge to do a day's shopping."

"Ah!" thought Charles; "it's an ill wind that blows nobody good; we shall just find customers here then." And when a day or two after he and Richard started for the next village, they were both in high spirits at the success they had met with.

"Richard," said Charles, who appeared to have been in deep thought for a mile or two, "excuse me, but as we were both obliged to sleep in one room at that little bit of an inn, I couldn't help observing—pray do you always say your prayers every night and morning, just as if you were a good little boy still?"

"Of course I do," said Richard.

"Of course you do! it's not of course at all; there are a great many people that never think of such a thing. It's all very well for women and children; but I don't like to see you do it—it's so exceedingly slow. I never think of doing such a thing, now; not since I used to live at home with grandmother."

"No more does that horse there, that you're driving," said Richard; "I don't believe he ever says his prayers. I went to see him have his supper, and have his bed made up, last night, and he just rolled over on his side and fell asleep;

but I never saw him say his prayers first, and I don't believe he ever does—night nor morning."

"Do you mean to compare me with that irrational animal, Mr. Morgan? because if you do—" and Charles ended this threatening sentence with a dreadful shake of his head.

It was not an easy thing to come to an open quarrel with Richard; he had a blunt, odd manner, indeed, of speaking his thoughts aloud sometimes, but he did it in a way that no one could quarrel with. "I believe there's some difference between me and that irrational animal," continued Charles, still with a little indignation; "I know I have a soul; as well as you; and if I choose to take care of it in my own way, that's my own affair."

"Well; you began first, finding fault with me for saying my prayers," said Richard; "it's I that ought to be offended."

"Oh! but you compared me to a brute beast, without a soul!" said Charles. "It's very singular though," he continued, after giving himself time to cool a little; "but your impertinent remarks—for I can't call them anything else—just put me in mind of a dream I had last night."

"Well! I thought you must have had a bad dream or something," said Richard, "for just as it was getting daylight, some noise woke me up, and *when I looked*, there were you, in the other

bed, having a regular battle with the bed-post!"

"And well I might," said Charles.

"But what was it all about?" inquired Richard.

"Oh! it was a bad dream," answered Charles.

"I'm a terrible fellow for dreaming; and I expect it all came of a book I'd been reading a few nights before, at the reading-room: it was a book about eastern countries—a good deal about the Turks there was."

"More likely," said Richard, "the turkey's leg you had for supper had something to do with it."

"Nonsense," said Charles. "It was all about the Turk's religion—that part I was reading—the what-do-you-call-it religion? my memory's so bad."

"Mahometan religion."

"Aye, to be sure; the Mahometan religion. Well, I was reading how Turks don't believe women have any souls—only men; and how none but the men are ever allowed to go into their places of worship; and how none but men have a chance of going to heaven, according to what the Turks believe; and I'd been thinking a good deal about this, which I take it was the cause of my dream."

"Let's hear it," said Richard.

"Why," said Charles, "I was dreaming I was up in London to select an assortment of Spring

ribbons for Smith and Fincham—you know they always liked my taste in ribbons—and so I was walking down the Strand in a hurry, as it seemed in my dream, to get into Fleet-street, but with all I could do, I couldn't get through Temple Bar; and thought I, I shall never get all done, and the goods packed too, in time for the down train—and so I tried to walk on faster, but, as I said, with all I could do, I *could not* get through Temple Bar.—Well, all of a sudden, what should I see coming down Fleet-street but a great Turk; one of the proper old-fashioned sort he was. I can remember his dress now—it was a greenish sort of colour—the upper part and the trowsers all alike; and his trowsers were so full, and so loose, they hung about his legs just like petticoats, only they were buttoned tight round both ancles. He had yellow morocco slippers, too, I noticed; and such a turban on his head! all beautiful red and white, rolled round together in a kind of a twist. He must have been above six feet, himself, and this turban made him look a good seven feet high. I never saw such a man in my life! I felt just like nothing by the side of him: so slow and solemn, too, he came along, and held up his head as if the pavement wasn't good enough for him to tread on. Well, he got nearer and nearer, and there was I working away, trying to *walk as fast as I could*, and still I never seemed

to get on. So at last he got close up to me, going on, as I thought, into the Strand; but instead of passing by, he stopped full in front of me: such a face he had! a dark complexion, but very clear, I took notice, and a beautiful warm glow over it. His nose and his mouth were in curling lines, and he had delicate black moustaches on his upper lip; not great ugly things, like what some of our English officers wear, which make them look as if they had no mouths at all, but just a delicate line; and a handsome black beard he had, and shining jet black hair—you could just see it round the edge of the turban. But his eyes I shall never forget—clear, bright dark eyes they were, and he fixed them upon me as he stopped before me, with a glassy stare that seemed to look me through and through. I felt quite frightened, and thinking it would be best to be civil, I said to him with the lowest and most respectful bow I could make, ‘Mr. Turk, may your shadow never be less!’ for, as I had just been reading, that’s what they say to one another in Turkey, instead of saying, ‘how do you do.’ So he folded his arms on his breast, and still staring at me with his glassy eyes, he began to speak. Such a clear, beautiful voice he had! and his way of speaking was calm and dignified. ‘Presume not,’ said he, ‘if thou art an Englishman, and a Christian, as thine appearance be-

speaks thee to be, presume not, oh, unbelieving son of an unbelieving father, thus to address one whose proudest boast it is that he believes in one God, and in Mahomet his prophet; keep silence before me, and I will teach thee wisdom. Afar off, in the blessed land of the East—the land which contains the sacred sepulchre of the holy prophet Mahomet,’ and he turned towards the East as he spoke these words, and bowed down to the ground—‘there in that distant land I heard of the faith of the English Christians. In eastern lands I had seen Christians, it is true, but I heard tell how the English Christians call their faith more pure than the faith of the Christians of the East; and I came seeking if, indeed, there were any faith whose followers could be compared to the followers of Mahomet; to see if their lives were holier, and whether their prayers were more frequent. I had heard, afar off, how it is the English Christians’ boast that their lives are guided by the book which they call their Holy Book; and how the English Christians love the House of Prayer. I had heard how, like the Christians of the East, they hold that monstrous error, that women have souls as well as men; and how they believe that women as well as men may hope to reach the Paradise which lies beyond the grave; and I am come that I might see whether *these things* are so; that I might behold

with mine eyes, what I had only heard with mine ears, and afar off. I left the beloved land, and consented for a time to be an exile from the country which holds, like a jewel in a casket, the precious city of Mecca'—and then he turned to the East again, and bowed—'and I am come to see how English Christians live. Day after day I pass along the streets; I see men hurrying to and fro, with care-worn looks, and eager, anxious faces, and when their prayer-bells call them to the House of Prayer, I have paused and watched to see them enter—but they turn not in. Sometimes, as I pass along, observing the manners of the people (may mine eyes be washed from the defilement!) I have even seen drunkenness in the English Christians' streets; and I have heard the name of the Great God profaned! (may mine ears be purified from those sounds!) and I have said, are these the Christians of whose holy faith I heard?—One House of Prayer I have passed by after another; sometimes their open doors invited me to enter. I have paused and looked in, for it is a thing forbidden to the followers of Mahomet to cross the threshold of the Christian's place of prayer; and there, verily, even as I had been told afar off—I saw women—women in numbers, kneeling in worship, as if devoutly believing they had souls to be saved; and mingled here and

there amongst these poor women, I have seen some of the sons of Adam, a few men, privileged, as it seemed, to have souls, and privileged to enter the House of Prayer. Now have I seen with mine eyes how English Christians live, how English Christians worship; and this have I concluded to be their faith; that a select number only of men have souls, but that all the rest have neither souls to care for, nor heaven to hope for, nor hell to fear; but are like unto the beasts that perish.'"

Here Charles Dallaway (who, as he related his dream to Richard, seemed excited by the very recollection of it) was obliged to pause for want of breath. "But," he continued presently, "I was not going to stand there quietly to be insulted in this way, and to be told by a Turk that Englishmen live as if they believed they have no souls. I felt myself getting quite in a rage, and for all he was so big, I doubled my fist like this (and Charles clenched his little closely-knit fist) and was going to fall to, and teach him what it was to insult an Englishman."

"Ah," said Richard, "that was when I saw you fighting with the bed-post, I suppose."

"No doubt it was," answered Charles; "but the worst of it was, that every time I was going to hit him a blow, some creature behind me, that I *couldn't see*, caught me by both elbows, and

held back my arms, so that I couldn't strike; jibbering and tittering, and whispering all the time, first in my right ear, and then in my left, 'it serves you right—it serves you right.' It put me in such a rage to be held back in this manner, by a creature I couldn't see too, I thought I should have died; and then the great Turk began again with his solemn voice, and his glassy eyes looking calmly at me all the time.

"Young man, I perceive by thine intelligent countenance, that thou wouldst not be slow to learn, if thou hadst but the opportunity and the will (there was some discernment in that remark, I thought, said Charles)—listen, and learn wisdom from the words of my mouth, for my lips shall not deceive thee. I would fain persuade thee to become a follower of the great prophet Mahomet; oh, that thou wouldst travel to my native land, and see how the believers in our holy faith are taught to live! There, in that blessed land, thou shalt be instructed in that great truth, that men have souls; not a privileged few alone—but all men. There, men say holy prayers, twice, thrice—nay five times in the day; whether in the street, or in the market, or in the divan, or on board ship, alone, or in a crowd;—at the hours of prayer, the followers of Mahomet spread their carpet, and kneel down and worship with their faces towards the holy Mecca. Come,

and thou shalt learn how to abstain from the juice of the grape; for to us the wine-cup is a thing forbidden. Come, and wash thine ears, and cleanse thine eyes, and pray that thou mayest one day hear the music and see the glories of Paradise. Come, and.....' Just then," said Charles, "as I was going to hear about Paradise too, you began shouting out it was six o'clock, and time to get up; so there was an end of my dream!"

"It was a very remarkable dream," said Richard; "and I must say your Turk made the best of his religion; but if you have been reading about it, I dare say it struck you, as it always does me, that a man may be a very good Mahometan, without being a good man. I mean, the Mahometan religion seems to be all outward forms and ceremonies; but a Christian can't hope to go to heaven without having a pure heart; and I question whether you would find much purity of heart amongst the Mahometans."

"Why, I thought it didn't seem all fair," said Charles, "though I certainly couldn't deny that what he said was quite true of many that call themselves Christians."

"No, you couldn't deny that, if it had been all real, instead of being only a dream. Many people in our country who would be quite offended if *you said* they weren't Christians, live very

much like heathens, and not half so well as Turks. Now, if I was going to interpret your dream," continued Richard, after looking very thoughtful for some minutes, "I should say that creature that held you back by the elbows so that you couldn't strike the Turk, was conscience; because if, as you say, you never say your prayers, of course conscience pulled you back, when you were going to fly in a rage with him for saying some Englishmen live as if they believe they have no souls."

"Really," said Charles, "I think you might leave me to interpret the dream my own way; your personal remarks are extremely unpleasant!"

"Only I wish so," said Richard, "instead of finding fault with me for saying my prayers, I do wish so, Charles, you would not go to sleep of a night just like that —"

"Like that horse," said Charles, finishing Richard's sentence for him. "I won't endure this, I won't indeed; twice in one day to be told I'm like a brute beast!"

"Charles, don't take it unkind of me; you know I meant nothing unkind." And the good fellow's face was so full of kindness as he spoke, it was impossible for Charles to quarrel with him. Besides they were just getting near Millham, and as Charles intended to stop and drink tea *there with his grandmother*, Richard reminded

him of his promise to take him to see the good old lady.

"Grandmother!" shouted Charles, as he pulled up before the cottage-door; "are you at home?"

The door was quickly opened by the old lady herself. She looked like a picture as she stood there in the porch in her dark stuff gown with tight sleeves down to her elbows, and a blue handkerchief folded neatly over her shoulders and pinned down to a point in front; her cap was as white as snow, with the frill quilled close round her face; and a broad black ribbon was pinned round her head. She had small well-turned features, and must have been a pretty woman when she was young. But old age had added a beauty of its own, silvering the hair, which was turned back off her forehead, and tucked under her cap, so that not much of it was visible; and then she had such a kind pair of blue eyes, it made you feel happy when she looked at you.

"My dear boy!" said she; "sure that's never you! I couldn't think what grand company I'd got!"

She was a good old lady, it's true, but like other people she had her faults; and it was her weak side to be proud of "her boy," as she called Charles; she never had the heart to find fault with him for trying to look so much like a gentleman; and if truth must be told, she felt rather

a secret pride in it ; and so she undid much the good she had taught him when a child.

On seeing a stranger with Charles, the lady stopped short. "You see, grandmother said Charles, "I've brought a gentleman to you ; he's a particular friend of mine—Richard Morgan."

Richard turned very red, when he heard Charles tell his grandmother he was a gentleman ; it made him feel like an impostor.

"Walk in, Mr. Morgan, and I'm glad to see you," said the old lady ; "I've so often heard your name from my boy here, that you do seem altogether like a stranger."

This speech relieved Richard a little ; and he was in hopes now, that he should not have to tread upon thorns all the evening, whilst she mistook him for something more than he was.

"I believe, Mrs. Lock," said he, "Charles and I began life together at Smith and Finchard the very same year." And having made this remark, and let the old lady know the truth of the matter, Richard felt quite at his ease.

"And now," said old Nurse Lock (for she had formerly been a nurse, by profession, and she retained the title,) "I hope, Mr. Morgan, you and Charles will stop and take a cup of tea with me, if such gentlemen as you can put up with my plain way."

Richard felt a little uneasy again at the last part of this speech ; but Charles told his grandmother to get tea ready by all means, and taking possession of the whole of the fire-place, he stood with his back to it, whistling, and getting very much in his grandmother's way whilst she was getting the kettle to boil. Richard insisted on blowing the bellows for her, and filled up the tea-pot out of the boiling kettle every time she wanted water.

"You make quite a lady of me, Mr. Morgan, I'm sure," said the old lady ; "I wish you a better office."

"Really, Richard," said Charles, who never seemed to dream of fetching the kettle for his grandmother, "you make me quite ashamed of myself!"

As Richard set the kettle on the fire again, the kettle began to sing ; and at the same minute, a thrush, which was hanging in a cage in one corner of the room, began to sing too, as if he was trying which could sing best. "There's my thrush going to let you hear how he can sing," said Nurse Lock ; "he hears the kettle singing—that's what it is—it always sets him off!"

Charles stuck a piece of bread between the wires of the cage ; "there old fellow," he said, "you and I are old friends you know, that's for old acquaintance' sake." And Charles whistled

and the thrush sang, till they made Nurse Lock's head ache ; but she did not say so, because she liked to see Charles pleased.

"I hope Mr. Morgan," said Nurse Lock, as he and Charles at last said good-bye, "I shall see you another day—and often." Richard promised ; and away Charles drove through the village, to the great astonishment of all the neighbours ; nor did he forget to remind Richard as they reached Southbridge, that he had kept his part of the bargain, and now he hoped Richard would fulfil his promise of taking him to see his cousins.

"Very well, to-morrow afternoon, then," said Richard ; "I always go there on a Sunday. Good-night !"

"What on earth can he want to go and see my cousins for?" said Richard to himself, as he parted from Charles ; and something, it's impossible to say what, made Richard walk on with a quickened pace, as he went home to his lodgings that night. ●

CHAPTER III.

"Drink deep, or taste not the Castalian spring ;
A little knowledge is a dangerous thing."

CHARLES DALLAWAY had never entertained the slightest doubt, hitherto, as to his being a vastly superior person to Richard Morgan, in every respect ; but the new connexion between them had necessarily produced a more intimate acquaintance, and in the last few days, during which they had been travelling about together, they had learnt more of each other, than during the whole ten years in which they had stood side-by-side behind the counter in Smith and Fincham's shop.

The result of this, as concerned Charles, was very galling to his vanity ; for though he would not have acknowledged so much to a third person, he could not get rid of a secret consciousness that he had been under a mistake in fancying himself Richard's superior. He knew very well too (though he would not have allowed this either to another) that what gave Richard the advantage over him, was his high religious principle. He called Richard "a dull fellow," and "a slow fellow ;" he even repeated these words

aloud, and over and over again, as he walked by himself towards his lodging ; as if by so do he would try to recall the old feeling with which he used to look down upon Richard ; but vain.

So determined not to be Richard's inferior anything, Charles hit upon an expedient which would help to skin over the wound which had been made in his vanity. He would go to the reading-room on his way home, and see if he could not find some book on religious subjects which seemed likely to suit his taste ; he would take it home and read it ; and then if Richard recurred to those subjects again, he should have something to say in reply. Religious principles, Charles thought, were the only thing which seemed to give Richard an advantage over him ; so he resolved that he would adopt a set of religious principles too ; and then he should at least be even with him.

Not that Charles had any intention of adopting principles which would oblige him to become different from what he was at present ; it was not likely that this sudden thought should be accompanied by any serious purpose of living otherwise than he had been accustomed to live ; it was far more likely that he would take up with notions which seemed to justify his present course of life, than that he would consent to be

any principles, which enjoined the performance of a great many things he disliked doing ; any principles, in short, which set the standard of right and wrong inconveniently high.

Not that Charles was at all an immoral man ; on the contrary, he had always been remarkably steady, and attentive to business ; and as for his heart, it was kind and affectionate ; except, indeed, when self-love happened to stand in the way ; for instance, he loved his old grandmother very much, but he loved himself better. Charles no doubt passed in the world, for an undeniably good character ; but if he were tried by a high standard, it could not be said with truth, that he deserved to be called " a good man." Charles was clever, but he was not wise ; not wise enough to know his own faults ; may be he will have to go through many troubles and disappointments before he finds out he has any ; and many more troubles and disappointments still, before he finds out that troubles are sent to cure him of his faults, before he will try to get rid of them ; poor Charles, and more troubles and disappointments even then, perhaps, before he gets the better of them. The kindness of home was not enough, and the discipline of school was not enough ; he must endure the discipline of life too ; and may be that will bring him peace at last ; for now, though he is determined

he'll have a merry life of it, and enjoy himself. Poor Charles does not know what it is to feel a real peace or rest.

Poor Charles, for a long time past he had made it the study of his life, to be like several other young men of his acquaintance, who, like himself, were not very remarkable for wisdom, so that he had grown ashamed to seem the same that he used to be at home; and now, the old principles he acted on, were, "because he liked" or "because he was obliged," to do a thing, "because a thing would help him up in the world."

"What a slow fellow that Richard is, to be sure!" repeated Charles to himself once more, as he ran up the well-worn, lead-covered steps to the gas-lighted, cheerful-looking reading-room. It was late on Saturday night; the reading-room, which a short time before had been full, was now left deserted; and there was nothing to disturb Charles as he looked over the catalogue for a book that seemed likely to suit him. Column after column, one letter of the alphabet after another, his fore-finger traced down the page, still there was nothing that seemed just what he wanted; till at last, as he was looking through the "T's," and getting very impatient, he stopped at the title of a book called "*The only Religion for an Intellectual Being.*" "Surely," thought

Charles, "that's the book for me, then ; whatever Mr. Richard may be in other respects, I suppose his intellect would not be much of a match for mine !" He took the book down from the shelf, and after looking through the headings of the chapters, and turning over the pages, he tucked it under his arm, and ran whistling down stairs.

The streets were crowded. Workmen having just received their pay, were hurrying, many of them to spend it in drinking and playing cards at the public-house ; and some, remembering they had wives and children to feed, were only indulging in an extra pipe on their way home to bed. Here and there were groups of people talking together under a gas-lamp, or staring in at a print-shop window ; and women with babies under their shawls, and baskets on their arms, were toiling home from market.

Charles saw none of them ; his thoughts were busy with other things ; and once alone in his lodging, he diligently set to work with the preface of the book ; but falling fast asleep over it before he had read half a dozen pages, he woke up in the dark an hour or two after, and hurried into bed ; not forgetting to lay the book within reach, with a resolution to spend his Sunday morning reading it in bed. It was many a day since Charles had been to Church on a Sunday ; but he always declared he kept the fourth Com-

mandment, by making it a day of rest. - It difficult to say by what chain of reasoning t intellectual young man proved, that the f words of that Commandment, "Remember t thou keep *holy* the Sabbath-day," were to be l observed than those which follow, "in it th shalt do no manner of work." Surely Char would not dare to say he kept the Sabbath *hol* who ever kept it *holy* enough? who, that born of a woman, can so much as fathom t meaning of that word, *holy*?

Charles was not aware that the book he h chosen, was written (to use the gentlest term) a free-thinker; but it all seemed written in su a religious way, and as if he that wrote it w only a far better man, and more enlightene and more sincere than most other people, th Charles read on, without the slightest suspicio he thought it was just the book that suited hir it made all so easy, and left so much to his ov choice about what he would believe, and what would not; and the author of the book pr nounced many things that Charles had be taught to do and to believe when he was child, to be old-fashioned prejudices, and c wives' fables; and this gave him great satisfas tion; because he had long neglected and d regarded these very things, and now he wou feel as if he had the authority of *reason*.

justify him; for the author wrote a great deal about reason; and he seemed to think man's reason was the greatest thing that ever was created, and to consider it quite out of the question that there could be any thing greater.

Charles shut up the book at last with a triumphant slap, and a resolution, that if Richard did not begin about religious subjects the next time they took one of their long drives together, he would begin himself, and let Richard hear what clever things he could say. And the chances were, that Charles would himself have to introduce the subject, as Richard was naturally more of a thinker than a talker.

By the time Charles had finished his studies, it was four in the afternoon; and as Richard had promised to call for him at five, to take him to his aunt's, he began to think of performing his toilet. Richard did not fix an earlier hour, as he had no mind that Charles should interfere in any way with the walk he always took after church with his cousin Anne.

Anne's father, Mr. Hardman, he it known, had for many years been head man in Smith and Fincham's shop, a kind of confidential foreman—very much valued by Smith and Fincham for a peculiar faculty he possessed, of detecting a cheat, if any unfair dealing was ever attempted by those with whom they carried on their large

mercantile transactions; he was a man of few words, and seemed scarcely to belong to the family-party at home, being out all day on week-days at Smith and Fincham's till eight in the evening; and during the short time he was at home, it was his custom to sit in a summer-house at the end of the little garden, smoking, or to walk up and down the gravel walk with his hands in his pockets, and his pipe in his mouth, looking exceedingly sulky; the pipe was only taken out when Mr. Hardman had occasion to make a sneering remark; and it was his favourite maxim, that "people only do right when there's something to be got by it." Query? as Mr. Hardman knew more about his own motives than he possibly could of other people's; was this his own rule of life?

Mrs. Hardman was a laundress, by which it must not be supposed that she had any personal acquaintance with the mysteries of the washing-tub; but she was the superintending head of a large establishment in the wash-house and laundry, and employed by many of the best families in South-bridge. When her husband's means and her own were put together, they were comfortably off; so that their three daughters had been sent to rather an expensive school, where they learnt to do a great many things which were never likely to be of any use to them; and as for their dress, the ladies

in Southbridge were none of them so smart on a Sunday as Mrs. Hardman and her daughters. The two eldest girls, who were rather uninteresting individuals, assisted their mother in her business, and Anne, the youngest, was apprenticed to a dress-maker. She was by far the nicest girl of the three, and was Richard's favourite; she had a sweet disposition, and was easily led, and liking to please Richard, (who, as we know, had a great dislike to people dressing beyond their station,) her dress was always in better taste than her sisters, and her carriage was altogether more quiet. Anne was rather under the middle height, and well made; there was something neat in all her movements, and she had the kindest little face in the world; it was grave enough, sometimes, but when Anne smiled at you, you felt as if the sun was shining into your heart. She had such a winning way with her, too, that no one Anne was kind to, could help being fond of her; as was said before, she was easily led, she was yielding and confiding; and what she might become as years passed over her, would depend very much on the friendships and connexions she might form.

Richard's walk with Anne was the one chief pleasure of his life. Any one would have wondered why, for she was very different to himself. *She was rather fond, moreover, of amusing*

herself by teasing Richard ; but, strange to say, Richard liked being teased, when Anne teased him, for she always made it up afterwards with a kind word and a kind look ; and so it was, that Richard's walk with Anne on a Sunday afternoon, was what he looked back to half the week and forward to for the other half, as the happiest hour in the whole. Perhaps Richard hardly knew how much he thought about it ; but whether he knew it or not, the fact was so, and these thoughts helped to refresh and cheer him through the dull, dry employments of the other six days of the week. Anne had been particularly kind this Sunday ; she promised Richard as he pressed her little hand within his own, that she never would tease him any more, and she really would try and be more what Richard wished her to be ; and after Richard had parted with her at the door, as he went to fetch Charles, he looked back once, and she was still standing there on the step, watching him down the street and she smiled and nodded to him as she turned to go into the house, and Richard thought what a blessing it would be if he could, but always have that dear, kind little face to look at.

Charles's toilet was just accomplished, when Richard arrived ; he had been taking more than ordinary pains with it ; every particular hair of *Mr. Dallaway's* head seemed to shine with a

extra polish that afternoon; and having at length put the finishing-stroke to his curls, he finally indulged in an extra allowance of lavender-water on his handkerchief, which perfumed the surrounding air, as he and Richard went on their way to Mrs. Hardman's. Charles had selected a dark-blue tie, as being the most becoming colour to his complexion; and he wore a ruby-coloured waistcoat of figured satin; his hat was put on the *least* bit in the world on one side, so as to avoid crushing the curls, and he flourished his cane as he went with an air of conscious superiority. Poor Richard fancied himself quite eclipsed, and he could not help feeling a little nervous as to what Anne would think of him by the side of Charles. "But no," thought he, "she's too kind and too good, to like me less because I'm not so good-looking, and not so much dressed up as Charles."

The idea of Mr. Dallaway having wished to be introduced to the Hardman's, was very gratifying to the feelings of the family in general, with the exception, of course, of Mr. Hardman, who never seemed gratified at anything; he only took his pipe out of his mouth when he heard who was expected, and said "who ever heard any good of him?" and then he put it in again; but Mrs. Hardman, whose highest aim in life was to be, what she called, "looked upon," felt

quite predisposed to like Mr. Dallaway, and she had already decided in her own mind, that the fact of his wishing to know them, was an undeniable proof that he must be a young man of discernment. Anne and her sisters already knew him by sight, and felt agreeably excited at the idea of making acquaintance with such a genteel-looking young man.

Charles made a most favourable impression; he was so attentive in handing the tea-cups, and had such pleasant things to say to every one, it was impossible not to like him. He seemed disposed to make himself quite at home; Richard thought rather too much so, considering it was the first visit, and all were in a merry mood. Richard was once quite at a loss to think what they were all so much amused at, when that wicked little Anne touched one of her sisters on the arm as she glided behind his chair, and set them all laughing by pointing, with a mischievous look, at a large buckle which fastened Richard's old-fashioned black stock, and was unfortunately visible just above the collar of his coat.

Mrs. Hardman withdrew shortly after tea, giving out, as she passed Richard, that "it was always her custom to read a chapter on a Sunday evening;" she thought Richard would be impressed with a favourable idea of her piety; but he was wondering in his own mind whether she

meant to say, she only read a chapter one day in the week. Most of the party seemed fast forgetting it was Sunday evening, and at last Charles, who observed an accordion lying on a little table, proposed to Anne that she should favour them with "Sweet Jenny Jones." This brought Anne back, for a minute, to graver thoughts; she glanced at Richard, who was watching her with anxiety. "Anne, I'm sure you wouldn't," he said in a low, confidential tone.

"No, Mr. Dallaway," said Anne, "I play nothing but Psalm-tunes on a Sunday evening."

"I assure you," Mr. Dallaway answered, "that's an old-fashioned prejudice, unworthy of a young lady of your spirit;" and he hoped, at any rate, he should have the pleasure of hearing "Sweet Jenny Jones" another time.

The conversation became gradually limited to Mr. Dallaway and the three girls; they seemed all to forget Richard's very existence; even Anne's chair was slightly turned away from him, and she seemed quite taken up with listening to, and laughing at, Charles's wit. Richard could endure this no longer; and though being alone with Mr. Hardman was a thing he generally avoided if possible (being, as they were, men of opposite natures,) he now betook himself to the garden, and sat with him in the summer-

house for the rest of the evening. What wounded him more than all was, that when he came back to remind Charles it was time to go, Anne never seemed to have observed he had been absent: it was silly of Richard, no doubt, but there were tears standing in his eyes when he said "good-night," to Anne, which he did in such a low tone of voice that it failed to attract her attention; and Richard turned away to go. "Anne," said one of her sisters, as Richard went out at the door, "you didn't say 'good-night,' to Richard."

Anne flew to the door, "Richard! Richard! good-night!" she cried. Richard could not refuse to take the offered hand, but he parted from her without saying another word.

It was well that some days came between this Sunday evening and the next journey Charles and Richard took together; it gave Richard time to regain his usually even temper; but after all, this was not to be easily done; and there was still a wound left, though Richard had tried over and over again to convince himself that there could have been no intention of unkindness on Anne's part, or she would not have run to the door to wish him "good-night;" and then he turned round on himself, and thought how *bearish* it was of him to turn away without speaking to her; he thought of it till he almost persuaded himself it was he, and not Anne, that had been

to blame, and he resolved to be more reasonable in future.

But, however Richard might reproach himself with being *bearish* to Anne, it did not prevent his feeling very savage towards Charles, when he began, soon after they started on their next expedition, to express his admiration of Anne in what Richard thought an impertinent manner; it was anything but agreeable to his feelings to hear Anne's name spoken by Charles's lips, as he began in his off-hand way: "That cousin Anne of yours is a monstrous nice girl!" and there is no telling how much more he might not have said, if all his attention had not been necessary at that moment in managing the horse, which had been frightened by one of Richard's violent kicks at the splashing-board.

There was a restlessness and excitement in Charles's manner that morning, which some people might have mistaken for high spirits; but Charles's mind was ill at ease. He had been reading and thinking over his new book again, till all his thoughts were in a whirl; and though he did not feel thoroughly convinced by what he read, he was resolved to take up with the principles he met with in this book, because they left him so much at liberty to choose for himself about what he would believe; at all events he would *ply* Richard with questions, and hear

whether he could knock down the arguments with which he had been cramming his head ; it was hardly fair to take Richard by surprise in that way, but for that Charles did not care.

Nor was Charles's heart much more at ease than his mind, for there was already lurking there a secret thought of mischief, which he felt strongly inclined to practise upon Richard ; he had perceived the state of Richard's feelings with regard to Anne, and he felt a great desire to prove his own superiority by "cutting Richard out," as he called it. This was nothing but vanity ; for he did not know enough of Anne as yet, to care whether she liked him or not. It was, however, only an under current in Charles's thoughts ; for, just now, he was watching for an opportunity to introduce the subject of the book ; so, as they happened to drive past the same village spire they had seen on their last drive, Charles pointed up to it with the end of his whip, and said, "So you really think, Richard, I am too ambitious in wishing to be like the tip-top stone in that steeple?"

"What a restless fellow you are !" said Richard, "you won't let a man have any peace of his life ; I only say the same as I did before—which do you think is of most use—the top stone or the bottom one?"

"Well !" said Charles, "of course I was only in

joke about that; but still I don't like the feeling of having anybody above me;" he was silent for a little while, and then he continued (neatly flicking a fly from one of the horse's ears with his whip, as he spoke;) "at all events there's one thing in which there may be equality between men in different ranks—and that's intellect! there's no reason, I suppose, why a labouring man shouldn't have as good an understanding as a rich man."

"Of course," said Richard, "you might find plenty of dull men amongst the gentlemen, and clever ones amongst the labouring classes; if you could give them an even chance, and educate them all alike, we should no doubt oftentimes find a rich mine in a poor man's head, that only wants to be brought to light by education, and many a rich man with nothing in his head but what is put there by others."

"Well done, Richard! that was well said, and spirited, I declare," said Charles; and then he added with an air of great satisfaction, "I believe I was born with a pretty good lining to my skull. And talking of intellect puts me in mind, Richard, of another book I've been reading. A wonderful intellectual book it is! and a very religious book too, I assure you; it's written by a man of first-rate talent too, only I can't remember his name."

"What's it about?" asked Richard.

"Why," answered Charles, "I'll tell you the title—'The only Religion for an Intellectual Being'—that's the name of it. There's one chapter most wonderfully convincing to be sure!"

"What did it convince you of, then?" said Richard; "that rational beings ought to say their prayers?"

"Come," said Charles, "don't be always recurring to that subject: no, Richard," he proceeded, with an air of gravity, "it convinced me that I ought to use my understanding more on religious subjects than I have done; and I assure you I have been doing so. Just hear this sentence now; it's so fine, I couldn't help getting it by heart;" and Charles quoted from his new book: 'Let a man believe nothing that he cannot understand; if he cannot understand a thing, let him believe it at his peril: for the light of his reason is the immediate guidance of God; all he has to do, is to follow it sincerely; let him study the Bible by that light, and what seems to him to be the truth, is the truth, to his individual soul.' Isn't that a splendid sentence now?" said Charles, looking at Richard with an air of superiority. But he was very much provoked, that instead of appearing at all astonished, there was a smile on Richard's face, which he could not quite understand.

"Ah; it's wonderful," said Richard deliberately; "what silly things clever men will say, and write too, sometimes."

"Silly things?" said Charles, angrily; "I beg you will be more polite in the choice of your words!"

"Why, it wasn't you that wrote the book," said Richard, "and I don't see what right you have to be angry."

"No; but I admired it," said Charles, "and when I quoted a splendid passage from it, you said it was silly."

"Indeed," said Richard, "I didn't mean to offend you; but still I do say that even an intelligent child might see, that if you and I, and Smith and Fincham we'll say, and everybody else, are all to be guided each by the light of his own reason about what they'll believe—they might all understand differently, and all believe differently, and all contradict one another, and we should be all at sea; and you might as well say there is no certain truth at all, as say what you did."

"Well," repeated Charles, "of course all a man can do, is to believe that what seems to him to be the truth, is the truth; as long as his own reason is convinced, that's enough."

"That's an old story you know, Charles, you've got hold of; I don't mean to deny that *reason is a noble faculty*, as long as it's employed

upon its proper objects, (in weighing the evidences, for instance ;) but it never seems so noble, I think, as when it brings a man to own honestly, that there are some things beyond its reach ; and it's best to keep in mind there are many things in the Bible quite above reason. I think," continued Richard, "it's an insult you wouldn't offer to any fellow-creature that had written a book, to say his book meant just what anybody, or everybody, chose to think it meant, and that he had no particular meaning of his own when he wrote it." And then, he added thoughtfully, "Did you ever try the plan, Charles, of reading over the Belief before you read the Bible? it's wonderful how it brings out the meaning, and how one answers to the other!"

"Ah but," said Charles, not noticing Richard's question, "you are talking as if the Bible was all written by one hand ; that's the very point. The Bible, if you look, is written by a great many different people ; there's Moses and all the Prophets ; then there's Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and John, and others. You talk of reason leading people to believe what's contradictory, but I think you might find great contradictions in the Bible itself, if you were to look ; and it is but what you might expect, when it's written by so many different writers."

"But," said Richard, seriously, "its being

written by so many different writers, does not at all disprove that One God guided them all; why, even in worldly business, how often one sees many persons (clerks and secretaries, for instance) all writing, not out of their own minds, but writing for some one great man who tells them what to put down."

"But still," resumed Charles, "you must allow that the Bible does often contradict itself?"

"Are you talking for the sake of talking?" said Richard, "and just to seem clever; or do you really care anything about the truth? . Because the Bible is my all, Charles, my stay, and my guide and my comfort, and you can't expect me to talk of what I treasure in my heart, just for you to exercise your cleverness upon it; and it's pain to me to hear you talk."

"You say that, because you can't answer my argument," said Charles, "so you think it will be the best way to drop the subject."

"I certainly don't wish to hear you talk any more about the Bible," said Richard; "but as for your argument, I can, and I will say as much as this (it's not my own idea, but I met with it in a book I was reading one day,) of course every body knows there are a great many things in the Bible that look like contradictions, just on the surface and at first sight; but many of the greatest truths lie just in those parts, and what you

call contradictions, only serve to attract the more attention to them.

Charles did not quite see the drift of what Richard said, and he did not particularly wish for an explanation, so he only looked at him with an air of pity, and said, "Well, it's of no use to attempt to reason with you; you are altogether unreasonable."

"I think," said Richard, after a few minutes' silence, "you'll find 'reason' will give you cold comfort if ever you get into trouble."

"Oh," said Charles, "I should show the world then, how grand a fine moral character looks, when storms come over him! Morality! Richard, and the light of reason! that's the thing!"

"But," Richard began again with great concern, "it's not proved that a thing is not true, because we can't understand it. It just puts me in mind of poor old Jemmie Green; you know him, don't you? the blind man that lives up Friar's Road? born blind he was."

"I know him well enough," said Charles, as if he wondered what was coming.

"Well, now; I was trying to explain to him the other day, the difference between a red rose, and a white rose; but he said it was of no use for me to talk, he couldn't think at all what I *meant*."

"Of course he couldn't," said Charles.

"'But,' said old Jemmie," Richard continued, "'I've no doubt what you say is very true, for I never knew you tell me a lie; I know you said true,' he said, 'when you explained the difference between a round thing and a square one, because I can tell that by my touch; but you know I never had the faculty of sight, so I can't think what you mean by things being red and white, though I feel no doubt it's all as you say.'"

Richard looked at Charles to see if he took his meaning; but Charles chose to look very dull, so Richard took the liberty of explaining himself in plain words. "I mean, Charles, that we have not the proper faculties for understanding some things in the Bible, just as Jemmie Green has no sight to see colours; but we that have eyes know very well there *are* such colours as red and white, though he can't conceive them; and so why shouldn't there be some truths which man's reason cannot conceive, though at the same time, perhaps, the angels may see no difficulty in them?" Richard paused; but Charles did not seem inclined to answer, so he went on, "Well, just as that blind man trusts me that what I told him about colours was true, because I never told him a lie, and because he knew I told him true about many other things; so we may trust God, that those things He tells us

which we *can't* understand, are true, for the sake of the many things He tells us which we *can* understand."

"Yes," said Charles, "if God Himself spoke to me out of Heaven, and told me a thing was true, I would believe it; but how am I to know it really is God that speaks in the Bible?"

Richard looked thoughtful for a few minutes. "I suppose," said he, "one cannot reasonably doubt it, when one remembers that what the prophets foretold in God's name, always came true. That's one reason; and I believe there are a great many more in learned books, which I never read."

Charles felt annoyed; he did not know enough of history to understand what Richard meant about the prophecies being fulfilled; he had never even taken the trouble to observe how many things that are related in the Gospels, had been exactly foretold by the prophets, hundreds of years before.

"You see, Charles," Richard continued, "you want to make your own conditions; you say, if God Himself spoke to you out of Heaven, and told you a thing was true, you would believe it. What right have you to expect a direct voice from Heaven to tell you what to believe?—*that* is what I call *unreasonable*. Besides, do you think you could bear it, if you did hear God

speak? no doubt He knew we should not be able to bear it, except He spoke to us in the form of a man; and when you read what Jesus Christ spoke, you do hear God speak. Now just listen to me; (now I have begun, you must let me finish). *Reason* cannot show any cause why the Creator, if it pleased Him to do so, might not *reveal* mysteries to His creatures, which they could not find out for themselves. The holy men who wrote the Gospels tell us that it *was revealed* from Heaven, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. The miracles they worked were, as one may say, their credentials, to show that they had authority from heaven for what they taught and affirmed; and reason has no cause to doubt their truth. Now, have patience with me one minute longer," said Richard, (seeing Charles was about to interrupt him), "and listen to what I was going to say; that just as the offspring of man, is man, and partaker of the same human nature; so the Son of God, is God, and partaker of the same Divine nature; God *of* God, as we say in the Belief. And, therefore, I say, that when you read what Jesus Christ spoke, it is the same as if God spoke to you out of heaven, and told you what to believe."

Richard paused, and presently turning to Charles, who was trying to frame some clever objection, he added, "but don't let us talk any

more about such subjects as these, Charles ; I'm not much fit to do it, I know ; only you drove me to it, and I knew I was bound to be ready to give a *reason* for the hope that is in me."

Charles declared it was too bad, when Richard had said all he wished, to want to put an end to the conversation ; and so he returned to the charge again. "But why haven't I a right to make my own conditions ? and why mayn't I believe what I please ? that's what I want to know ! Surely there's no fear that a man would be eternally condemned, just for not believing what he can't understand ?"

"You make me shudder, Charles ; for mercy's sake don't talk in that way. I will only just ask you whether it is not *reasonable*, that the God who created us, and who has, moreover, the prize to give away, (the prize of heaven, I mean,) should have a right to make His own conditions ? and if we will not receive them 'as a little child' would, without questioning, or trying to use our own cleverness, *we have not the slightest warrant* for thinking we shall ever go to heaven. He tells us that plainly enough, and it's an awful thing to trifle about. If we cannot prove (God forgive me for saying such a thing !) but if we cannot prove that the Bible is not true, the only safe way is, to live as if we believed it is true ; and then, perhaps, difficulties will clear off."

"That would be believing like a child, indeed!" said Charles indignantly.

"It seems the only safe way, Charles; and there's more true greatness of mind in it than in being proud of your intellect: there's nothing great in any kind of pride, depend on it."

"And what *am* I to be proud of, I should like to know," said Charles, "if I'm not to be proud of my intellect?" He felt half inclined to be angry, particularly when Richard told him seriously, that if he really felt the difficulties he said he did, he was bound to pray over them, and use proper means to get free of them, instead of talking about them in the light way he did. But there was something so earnest and so kind in Richard's manner, that it was impossible to quarrel with him, so Charles contented himself with flogging the unfortunate horse—it relieved his restless mind.

The subject was now dropped; but for a long time after this conversation with Richard, let it be who it might he was talking with, Charles was for ever introducing his new notions, and trying to get people into an argument, for the sake of hearing what they had to say, and to show his own cleverness; and he generally ended by lamenting over the "old-fashioned prejudices" he so often had to contend with.

Good Richard had said what he could; he

knew a little more than Charles did, for he was always fond of reading; but there are so many learned books that he had neither time nor opportunity to study, that he had not said half that might be said. And Richard did not want the learned books; he had gone on the plan of living according to the Bible, and he *felt* its truth. Charles, on the other hand, had more cleverness about him, but not such a good understanding as Richard; and he could not bear the idea of a religion in which no cleverness is required; he was clever, but he was little-minded and vain.

Alas! that there should ever be men of superior intellect, and noble minds, and gentle dispositions, who, (unlike the truly great Newton,) but find a hindrance in the very greatness of their gifts; who would rather flounder about in a chaos of uncertainty, with their souls in jeopardy, than lay hold of the Hand that is reached down to them from above, to lift them on to firm ground; and who refuse to stand on any ground at all, but what they can place themselves on by their own unassisted power.

CHAPTER IV.

"The leafless trees my fancy please,
Their fate resembles mine."

Burns.

MOST heartily did Richard regret that he had ever been the means of introducing Charles into his aunt's family; and it cannot be denied that a secret, undefined apprehension, as to whether his own future happiness might not in some way be affected by the step, had some share in this regret, (for Richard was very much like other people with regard to things of that kind;) but he felt, moreover, a real and considerable degree of anxiety on discovering the views which Charles had adopted, lest he might, in the course of time, attempt to spread the evil leaven amongst his new acquaintance. And Richard felt this more especially with regard to Anne; because she was still young and thoughtless, and required constant serious and kind advice from him, ("delightful task!" thought Richard,) to give steadiness to her character. He consoled himself with thinking that Charles's views were unknown to him at

the time he complied with his request, to introduce him to the Hardmans; indeed, he felt a strong suspicion of the truth, that though Charles was a careless liver before, he had never held the principles he now professed, till he read that book of which his head was so full on their last drive together. At all events Richard thought it would be "right" to see Anne, and give her a word of caution; and he would likewise mention the discovery he had made to his uncle and aunt, just hinting that he thought they would be very wrong if they encouraged Charles's visits.

Richard and Charles were absent several days on their next journey. The railways, which threw so many people out of employment, befriended their scheme; and as long as they kept to villages and lone houses which were distant from any station, and were now thrown out of the world by the old coaches being run off the road, they found great encouragement; they had taken the opportunity just at the right time, and they must make hay whilst the sun was shining, before another new railway, which in the course of time was expected to run through the line of country they had marked out for themselves, should knock their business on the head.

Whether Charles and Richard would hold together till that time, was, however, a chance. Things had gone on in this manner for eight or

nine months, and Charles was beginning to get tired of the kind of life, and Richard was heartily tired of Charles ; nor did the fact of his being now a constant visitor at the Hardmans on a Sunday evening, (in spite of Richard's caution,) dispose him to regard Charles with very complacent feelings ; more particularly as on those occasions he never lost an opportunity of saying little complimentary things to Anne. Still, they had invested their money in the horse and the dog-cart, and business was beginning to answer, and though they did not "move together in such an agreeable manner" as Smith and Fincham, it would be silly to give it up in a hurry, before they had realized a certain sum.

But things are often arranged for us by circumstances, (as thoughtless people say,) when we are at a loss how to arrange them for ourselves ; and Richard's wish that he was well out of the bargain, with a man of Charles's principles, was nearer being accomplished than he thought, and in a manner too he little dreamt of.

Richard got a letter one morning from Liverpool, dated "The Sea-lark ;" it was from a sailor cousin of his, whom he had not seen for three or four years : and he wrote to say that the ship he was in had just put into port at Liverpool, but as she was to sail again in a short time, and he was not able to leave her, he hoped Richard

would contrive to come and spend a few days with him. The sailor, like Richard, had a heart without guile; and from a similarity of taste and feeling, they had always been strongly attached to each other: since their school days they had been but little together, but when they did meet, there were so many old stories, and old jokes too, about by-gone boyish days, that there were not two merrier hearts under the sun.

"Anne," said Richard, as he opened the door of the Hardmans' parlour, one day soon after he got this letter, (it was between twelve and one, when Anne was at home from her work for an hour;) "Anne, should you be too tired to come and take a walk with me up to the old Lime Tree? come, it will do you good before you go back to your work again—you look very pale, Anne." (And then Richard turned red himself at the idea of his talking to Anne about how she looked.) "Besides, I want to talk to you about something very particular."

Anne looked a little surprised; it was quite an unusual thing for Richard to take her a walk between Sunday and Sunday. Richard mistook the look, and thought she did not wish to come. "If you're busy, you know, never mind," he said, "only I'm going away to-morrow, and I wanted to talk to you."

"Going away, Richard!" Anne was quite on

the alert now, and her bonnet was on in a minute; "going away? where can you be going to?—do tell me all about it." And away they went up to Richard's favourite seat under the old Lime Tree.

"Yes; I'm going away, Anne, to-morrow." And Richard made a pause, and stole a glance at Anne to see what effect this information had produced. He had the gratification of seeing a shade of sadness come over Anne's face as she said—

"I never dreamt of such a thing as your going away, Richard. I hope you're not going to be away long?"

Richard's little experiment had succeeded to his heart's content: "Anne really does care for me, then," thought he.

"Only for a week or ten days, Anne; but I'm afraid I shall be away next Sunday, and we shan't have our walk; you can walk with your sisters, you know, Anne." And then he told her all about the letter; and it was not till they got near home again, that Richard took courage to introduce the subject which was the chief reason for his wishing to see Anne. "Has that Charles Dallaway been at your house lately?" he inquired; "he's rather a forward, impertinent fellow; I expect, if you don't all keep him at arm's length, you might find him very troublesome."

"I think mother likes him, rather," said Anne; "and my sisters both like him very much."

"Well; I hope *you* don't like him," said Richard, "and I don't wish you to have much to say to him—you know what I think of him, and I've cautioned you before—he's a man I never feel I can depend upon."

"Oh! but I really think he's very entertaining, and very clever," said Anne.

Richard's countenance changed. "I know him better than you do, Anne; and I say again, if you have any regard for my opinion, as you always say you have, you'll keep Mr. Dallaway at a distance. I can't come in now," he said, as they reached the Hardmans' door; "I'm in a hurry—it's only you I wanted to see."

"And mind," said Anne, pretending to look very grave, "mind you conduct yourself with discretion, Richard, whilst you're at Liverpool. I was going to give you some good advice," she added, laughing, "only you won't come in and hear it."

"You're a saucy little thing," said Richard; "I think you have a few more roses in your cheeks than you had; mind you take care and keep them there till I come back."

As Anne ran in and shut the door, Richard turned away, only half satisfied; "he should *have liked it better*," he thought, "if Anne had

said decidedly that she did not like Mr. Dallaway at all.

In truth, Richard had fair cause for a little uneasiness, for Charles always tried to make himself as agreeable as possible to Anne, and often paid her compliments which Richard would never have had courage to utter; and worst of all, Richard could not help observing, with uneasiness, that Anne always looked pleased with Mr. Dallaway's compliments; nevertheless, she still walked out with Richard as usual on a Sunday; they had walked together on a Sunday so long, it had become almost a matter of course; and whilst Richard was there to walk with, Anne would never think of walking with any one else.

Charles had no intention of losing the opportunity Richard's absence gave him, of gaining a step in Anne's good graces; in addition to the pleasure it would be to "cut Richard out," his fancy was very much taken with Anne's pretty manners, and he thought it a thousand pities she should throw herself away on a slow fellow like Richard.

Yes; Anne took Charles's *fancy*—what deceitful tricks fancy plays upon people sometimes! Charles believed his affections were concerned; but what he felt was nothing more than a *fancy*; for if he had left Southbridge, or had happened

to make acquaintance with some new face, he would soon have forgotten Anne. Charles thought too, and he was not mistaken, that Anne was pleased by those attentions which gave so much pain to Richard. *Fancy* was playing tricks with Anne too; and though Richard had told her he should not be back to walk with her on Sunday, she nevertheless took more than usual pains with her dress that day, and thought more than usual about her looks: she was even silly enough, because Mr. Dallaway happened to say one day that he admired artificial flowers in ladies' bonnets, to spoil her pretty drawn white muslin bonnet, by sticking an artificial red poppy, and blue corn-flower, and one or two ears of wheat, on one side of it; and then she looked in the glass and wondered whether Mr. Dallaway would call that afternoon. (Oh, Richard! what would you have said!) But Mr. Dallaway arrived earlier than usual that Sunday; instead of waiting till tea-time, he came before afternoon service, which put Mrs. Hardman quite in a fidget, lest they should be late at church; and "the clergyman would be sure to observe," as she remarked to one of her daughters, "if they went in after the service had begun."

The poppy and corn-flowers were not lost upon Charles; he felt that his remarks were not unheeded by Anne, and he resolved to try his

influence a little farther. "May I ask," he began, "where you are going in that very becoming bonnet this afternoon?"

"To church," said Anne, and the colour came into her cheeks. Perhaps she remembered Richard's caution; but Richard was absent, and Anne's vanity was flattered, and Charles saw his advantage.

"To church!" he repeated, in a tone of well-feigned surprise; "you don't go to church twice in the day, surely?"

"Yes; we always go twice," said Anne, glancing at her mother.

"But just for once," said Mr. Dallaway, "on a beautiful day like this, I wish I could prevail on a certain young lady to take a walk instead: those flowers suit you exactly," he said, looking at Anne with unmistakeable admiration: "is it quite impossible to get leave?" he added; for it was plain from Anne's manner that she herself would have no very serious objections.

"I must go to church," she said; "mother's very particular about it."

"Ah! I thought so," said Charles; "I knew it was not your own doing; I thought you were a young lady of more sense than to be tied down by old prejudices of that kind; may I try and get leave for you to take a walk instead?"

Anne did not say "No;" so Charles seated

himself by Mrs. Hardman, and after much persuasion, succeeded in getting a half angry, reluctant permission, for Anne to "please herself." "I always set good lights before my daughters," said Mrs. Hardman, "and if they don't choose to follow them, it's no fault of mine." And away she went to church with her husband and her two other daughters; which latter made not a few little remarks to each other, as to what Richard would say, "when he heard," as Anne turned away with Mr. Dallaway in the contrary direction.

Anne met the Squire of Millham, as she and Mr. Dallaway crossed the first field; he was walking into Southbridge with his daughters. Anne glanced at the young ladies' dresses as they passed; there were no flowers in their bonnets, and Anne felt a suspicion that she had made a mistake, after all, in putting in the poppy and corn-flowers; but Mr. Dallaway admired the flowers, and Anne liked being admired better than anything in the world. So Anne went her way; and Mr. Dallaway not only admired the flowers, but he admired her independent spirit; and he told her again she had shown herself a sensible girl in getting rid of "old prejudices," and not suffering herself to be tied down by custom, and outward forms; and he perplexed Anne by saying that "*forms* of worship were a

great hindrance to people, and every body ought to worship God in his own way;" "he objected very much to forms of worship," he said, with an air of importance, "and it was shocking to think how many people went to church just because it was a custom they had been brought up in, and never seemed a bit better for it after all."

Mr. Dallaway had got hold of a little bit of truth, and he mixed it up with a good deal of error; and the little bit of truth helped to make the error look respectable; at all events, it puzzled Anne's weak head, and set her off her guard. Poor little Anne did not think to tell him that heavenly truth and comfort are conveyed to the soul by forms, as water is offered to a thirsty man in a cup. And though a man may contrive to drink water out of his hand, still he does not get so much of it as he would if he used a cup; because a great deal runs away between his fingers: and just so, those who neglect forms, know not how much spiritual truth they lose. Anne never thought to tell Mr. Dallaway, that because some people are contented with taking the cup into their hands and admiring its beauty, it is no reason why others should not drink of the water which it holds. For, alas! it is to be feared, that some do use forms, and admire them too, who never taste of the heavenly truth and comfort they convey. Anne never thought to say this, or any

thing like this; on the contrary, she thought what Mr. Dallaway said was very clever, and very convincing; and that, after all, it was a mistake to be so particular as her mother was, about going regularly to church.

But there was much to be said in Anne's excuse. It is true, that when she was a child, a lady who was one of her mother's customers, used to have Anne on a Sunday in the same class with her own children to learn her Catechism and Collect; but what were a few words, once a week, compared with the lessons of daily life at home! and the truth must be told, that though there was not another family in all Southbridge so regular at church on a Sunday as the Hardmans, both Mr. and Mrs. Hardman had very odd reasons for going there; and when Mrs. Hardman folded up her best gown, and put it away in a drawer on a Sunday night, she laid aside her religion at the same time, till Sunday came round again. Mrs. Hardman, as was said before, delighted in being respected and "looked upon;" and she felt a peculiar satisfaction when she found herself in her place at church, twice every Sunday, because it was such an undeniable proof to the clergyman, and every body else, she thought, that she was a most respectable woman; and she "should like to see that man, or woman," as she often said, "that could say a word against her."

She was a most unaccountable woman, this Mrs. Hardman; most unaccountable as a mother; she was satisfied if her daughters were with her at church, to keep up the respectability of the family; but she used no kind motherly influence with them to make them love what is right; and yet, she completely lost her temper with them if they did "anything that people could make remarks upon," as she expressed herself.

Mr. Hardman, too, had his reasons for being very regular in his place at church. It is a humbling thing to human nature to see how bad it is capable of becoming; and above all other sins are those that wear the mask of virtue; the only thought that can help to moderate the good man's indignation against hypocrisy, is that old saying, which so beautifully defines it as "the tribute which vice pays to virtue."

Smith and Fincham were both of them really good men, and so far as they could tell, they only employed men of good and high character in their establishment. Smith and Fincham were always at church, and the Hardmans' seat was just opposite to Smith and Finchams'. Mr. Hardman rejoiced in this circumstance; he had particular reasons for wishing that Smith and Fincham should always see him at church; it blinded their eyes to his real character, and enabled him to carry on, without being sus-

pected, a system of fraud by which he was enriching himself at their expense; or, as Mr. Hardman said to himself, which enabled him to "put something by against a rainy day."

Mrs. Hardman knew nothing of this—it would almost have killed her. "so respected as their family was," that Hardman should be known to do anything dishonest. No; no mortal knew anything about this, but Mr. Hardman himself; his wife and daughters only thought he was often very sullen and cross, when they really had done nothing to offend him, and they wondered to themselves what the reason could be; and they thought he always looked very unhappy, though he had every comfort of life about him; and they wondered, too, sometimes, why he always found fault with every thing and everybody, whether they deserved it or not.

As the Hardmans crossed the churchyard that Sunday afternoon, on their way to church, one of the party happened to look up at the weather-cock, and carelessly remarked that "the wind had changed." Yes, the wind had changed, the wind had changed yesterday; and when the wind changed, the "Sea-lark" sailed out of port from Liverpool, a day or two earlier than was expected. Richard parted with his cousin, and consoled himself for the sorrow of parting, *with the thought that now he should get back to*

Southbridge by Sunday, and after all he should not lose his walk with Anne. Richard stayed with a friend at Millham on the Saturday evening, and spent his Sunday morning there; but the afternoon found him on his way to church at Southbridge, and he smiled to himself as he thought how he should take Anne by surprise.

When Richard discovered that Anne was absent from church, he was filled with a thousand misgivings; the real reason never crossed his thoughts, indeed; but "no doubt Anne was ill," he thought, for the Hardmans never stayed away from church for any other reason, and Richard was glad he came back. He could not wait for the Hardmans to come out of church; but as soon as service was over, he hurried by the shortest way to the Hardmans' house; when, suddenly turning a corner of the street, Anne and Mr. Dallaway met his eye, at a little distance, returning from their walk; and they seemed so much pleased with themselves and each other, that they did not observe Richard till he was close to them.

Anne started when she looked up and met Richard's eye, and she tried to carry things off as if something very funny had happened.

"It's Richard, I declare!" she said; "you'll be amused to see me taking a walk with Mr. Dallaway, now, I dare say, Richard;" and she

pretended to laugh, but the laugh was not like her own old merry laugh.

"If I believ'd in ghosts," said Mr. Dallaway, trying very hard to seem at his ease, "I should have thought I'd seen the ghost of Morgan; just shake hands with him," he said to Anne, "and see if he's real flesh and blood."

Richard, in truth, had turned as white as a ghost; he was a bad hand at "carrying a thing off;" he took no notice of Charles, but he looked very miserable as he said to Anne, "he hoped she'd had a pleasant walk," and they parted. And no one knew, of all the passers-by, how uncomfortable those three individuals were feeling, as they stopped together for that minute.

For that *minute*? yes, it was but a minute; but Richard felt as if he had lived years in that minute; he felt as if he was grown an old man, as he passed along the crowded streets, heedless of the throng. As for Anne and Mr. Dallaway, they pretended to be very merry, by way of concealing the uncomfortable feelings which Richard's unexpected appearance had occasioned; and Anne laughed as Mr. Dallaway made some facetious remarks about the cut of Richard's coat, and his style of walking; and Mr. Dallaway laughed too, with an air of contemptuous superiority, as he said, "what a slow fellow he *is*, to be sure!"

Richard found his way to his lodging by a kind of instinct; for to say that he thought about where he was going, would not be true; he then deliberately bolted the door of his room, and sat down in his arm-chair. But sitting quietly in the arm-chair was an impossibility; he got up again—he walked backwards and forwards across his room, as if he were walking to save his life, or rather, as if he were trying to walk away from thoughts which followed wherever he went; faster and faster Richard walked; “he could never endure the sight of Dallaway again—impossible—they could never carry on business together any longer: a man of no principle.” And then he thought of Anne; he thought of what she always had been to him, and of what he had been used to hope she would be to him, one day; and Richard began to walk a little slower; he thought of her kind, winning ways, and he thought of the happy home he had always meant to have one day, when he could afford it; that home would never be perfect, without that kind little face to make sunshine in it. Richard’s heart softened at the thought; “perhaps I’ve been too hasty,” he thought; “I ought not to be so angry before I’ve seen her, and heard how it all happened; perhaps she’ll be able to explain; only, certainly, I didn’t think she’d have cared to walk out with anybody else,

particularly with that Dallaway—impertinent fellow! Poor Anne, she didn't know how to refuse, I dare say; he ought never to have had the impertinence to ask her; she must be sorry about it, I'm sure she must, so gentle and kind as she always is; she'll be able to explain it all—no doubt she will; he must contrive to meet her on her way to the dress-maker's to-morrow morning."

But though Richard said to himself there was "no doubt" Anne would be able to explain, he felt a secret consciousness that he was only trying to deceive himself; and when he thought again of Anne arm-in-arm with Charles Dallaway, he began walking again as furiously as ever, till the good woman where he lodged, as she sat in the kitchen below, began to wonder what had happened, for Mr. Morgan "to be at home of a Sunday evening, walking about like anybody walking for a wager," and she "wondered he didn't want tea, nor anything."

Good Richard, he never knew before how entirely he had suffered his happiness to depend upon Anne's kindness; but what had just happened threw considerable light on the state of his feelings. Richard tried to think as he lay awake that night, hour after hour, what he should say to Anne when he saw her the next morning—how he should begin; he even com-

posed the sentence a hundred times over, and a hundred different ways; he almost thought, after all, in the darkness of the night, that his having seen Anne walking with Charles Dallaway must be a dream; but the cold certainty of it settled upon his heart again as the daylight looked in upon him.

It was a chilly November morning when Richard left his lodging, a little before eight, hoping and yet dreading to meet Anne. The morning was in harmony with Richard's feelings; there was no comfort in it. The air was raw and foggy, and the pavement dirty and slippery with the red and yellow leaves, which had dropped from the trees which here and there were hanging over the garden-walls of happy-looking little homes. Children were going crying to school, and their mothers were scolding them; shutters were being taken down from shop-windows, and shopmen were busy arranging their goods to the best advantage; there was a woman with an apparatus for making hot tea for passers-by, and a tin of smoking-hot cakes; and the servant girls were all on the alert, sweeping the pavement before the doors, (sometimes all over Richard's shoes, but he did not observe it,) and whitening the door-step; Richard saw and felt nothing of it all; he was straining his eyes through the fog, till within a few yards of

him he saw Anne coming, walking very fast, wrapped up in her whittle shawl; she was looking on the ground, Richard thought with an unhappy look, and she started as Richard laid his hand on hers.

"Anne," he said, earnestly and kindly, "what happened yesterday requires some explanation; I believe you will be able to explain, or at least to excuse, what of course seemed very strange to me; and I came out on purpose to meet you, and hear how it all happened."

Richard waited for an answer; but Anne still looked on the ground, in silence, as if she were very much taken up with admiring the colours of the dead leaves; so he continued, "You must suppose, Anne, it seemed strange to me, after cautioning you about—about that Mr. Dallaway—to see you walking with him."

"You ought not to play people such tricks, then," said Anne; "I shouldn't have thought you'd have said what wasn't true, about what day you meant to come back!"

"My cousin sailed on Saturday, Anne," said Richard gravely, "some days before it was expected; and I hurried back, in hopes (Richard's voice trembled,) of having a walk with you as usual; how was it all, Anne? I'm afraid you were over-persuaded; tell me the truth of it all," he said, holding her little hand in both his own

great clumsy ones, "I'm sure you'll be able to explain it."

"I suppose," said Anne, holding up her little head, but still avoiding Richard's eye, I suppose I've a right to walk with anybody I please!"

Richard let the little hand drop; he had hoped to the last that Anne might have something to say which would explain what seemed, as he said, "so strange." But the cold words, and the tone, and the averted look, convinced Richard at last that Anne had nothing to explain; nay, she as good as said it was her own pleasure to walk with Mr. Dallaway.

Anne seemed in a hurry; "I shall be late if I don't make haste," she said, "I really must go, good morning;" and she turned away, leaving Richard to explain things to himself as well as he could. Richard did not attempt to detain her, but he stood and watched her till she was out of sight. "Could that really be Anne, so changed in so few days!"

Grieve not thyself too much, good Richard. Anne is not worthy of thee; she is not worthy of that kind generous heart of thine. And yet, perhaps, thou hast a little right to grieve, for she has done thee wrong; by her very kindness she has done thee wrong. If she had no great liking for thee, she should not have shown thee so great kindness; for she was often kind to thee,

Richard, when he saw her there in the street: she was still a girl. Richard, but she loved thee not; her husband was not coming under a mask; it was not her first wife that she might win thy affection—she was not that. Happy had been her life with thee, and she would have learnt wisdom in the walking through life by thy side; but she turned from happiness when she turned from thee, and all good hearts will call her - light -

Richard thought not then whether Anne was a widow or not. He did not think at all—Richard was not old. He did as if the world he had been born in was the same world as it was once—it did not seem like the same world it was before—there was something gone out of it. The fog around it was growing thin, and Richard was getting old. He walked on: so he was and comforted with his sense of feeling. For when Richard walked on as if he were walking in the world from something: he had seen a world of things and as last, feeling as if he were in a dream, he found himself close to the old lane from near Southbridge. From that garden he saw down—there, on that seat beneath the trees where he and Anne had sat so often, when he was there with her the day before he went to Liverpool the trees were still covered with bright yellow leaves, that looked

like showers of gold as the sun shone upon them ; but the rough autumn winds had since stripped them from the boughs, and now they lay dead at Richard's feet. If a like change had passed over every thing else, Richard had been well pleased ; but every thing else was looking just as when he sat there last with Anne ; so exactly the same, that Richard did not know how to bear it, so changed as all things were for him ; it was almost past endurance to see the cottage by the old Oak, he had so often fancied would be just the little home he should like for Anne, still standing in the same place, and looking as if nothing had happened.

"I'm behaving like a coward," thought Richard to himself ; "I'm ashamed of myself for trying to run away from what troubles me. I'll force myself to sit still here, and look trouble in the face." The effort calmed Richard a little. The clouds were breaking, and passing quickly away ; and as he sat and gazed through the openings between them, into the blue sky, one or two tears rolled down his face. He sat and gazed up into the sky—and his thoughts went after his eyes. "I will look up for comfort," thought he, "away from this troublesome world." Richard grew more patient ; more patient with others, more angry with himself. "How shall I say 'the Lord's Prayer' again?" thought he ;

"how shall I say 'Thy will be done,' and 'forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us,' if I go on feeling like this?"

Have patience with thyself, too, Richard; the hope which has been long cherished, must leave a wound when it is torn out, which will take time in healing. Have patience with thyself, and do thy best, and thou shalt even yet say "the Lord's Prayer" again with all thine heart.

It was well when Richard at last reached home again, that he had a kind, motherly body to take care of him; for he seemed very little inclined to take care of himself; in fact he looked so unlike himself, so ill in the face, and his dress so untidy, that, with some difficulty, his landlady persuaded him to go to bed and take a cup of warm gruel; for "as sure as she was alive," she said, "Mr. Morgan was going to be ill. And as for Mr. Morgan's shoes!" she said to her servant-maid as she went into the kitchen, holding one in each hand, "it would take her an hour to clean them; why, they looked, for all the world; as if he'd been walking over the ploughed fields; and he so nice and neat always; whatever was come to him she couldn't think!"

CHAPTER V.

"Phillis? she that lov'd thee long?
Is she the lass hath done thee wrong?
She that lov'd thee long and best,
Is her love turn'd to a jest?"

Old Ballad.

"I WONDER," thought Anne, as she went to put on her bonnet, the next Sunday afternoon, "I wonder what Richard will do; I wonder whether he'll come as usual this afternoon. I dare say he will;" and then she looked at the poppy and corn-flowers in her bonnet, hesitating whether to take them out; "but they looked so pretty, and Mr. Dallaway thought they were so becoming;" it was clear which way the wind blew, and the flowers were kept in. Anne's wonderings about Richard were soon at an end when Mr. Dallaway told them, soon after he arrived, that he heard poor Morgan was ill in bed; "so that being the case, might he hope," he said to Anne, "to have the honour of taking her for a walk again that afternoon?"

Anne, who felt a little sorry and vexed with herself when she first heard good Richard was ill, soon forgot these feelings again in the prospect of another walk with Mr. Dallaway; and she

laughed when he pleasantly remarked, as he gave her his arm, that "he hoped they shouldn't meet any more ghosts."

"By another Sunday," thought Charles, "Richard may be well again; I must make the most of the present;" so he explained to Anne what he called "the state of his feelings." Anne listened and believed; and before she came home it was a settled thing between them that they were to be married without delay.

"But it can't be before three weeks," said Anne, "because of the banns being asked, and there's the minister must be spoken to."

"Minister?" said Charles, "what minister?" I thought you knew my views on those subjects. If you're determined to be married at church—why, I'm sorry—"

Anne interrupted him; "You never meant to be married at the Register Office?" she said, with an anxious look of inquiry; "Mother wouldn't hear of it!"

"I can't help that;—if I marry at all, it will be at the Register Office."

"Mother would never hear of such a thing," Anne repeated; "she always says it isn't respectable."

"That's one of those precious old prejudices that some people's minds are so subject to," Charles answered,

"But you said just this minute, that my pleasure should be your pleasure, and I should only have to speak my wishes ; and I wish to be married at church ; we've always been used to go to church, and I shouldn't like the thoughts of going anywhere else to be married ;—pray let's be married at church !"

"Of course," Charles answered, "your pleasure will be mine in all things reasonable ; and I'm sure you only want to have things explained to you, and then you'll see them quite in a different light. Now listen to me, Anne ; you're a girl of sense ; and the best way to show it is by placing confidence in my judgment. I should never ask you to do anything wrong, you may be sure of that ;—and with regard to being married at the Register Office, perhaps you're not aware that it would be a perfectly legal marriage ? and what would you have more ?"

These imposing words, "legal marriage," sounded tolerably satisfactory, Anne thought ; still she could not help feeling it would be a strange step for her to take, when she had always been used all her life to go to the dear old church. "But," said she, "I should never get leave from father and mother."

"Marry first, and tell them afterwards, then," said Charles ; "that's easily settled : let me alone to manage all *that*. But you had better not say

anything about it to anybody, yet;—there'll be a great many things to settle first; there's some way of getting a living to be thought of;" and Anne's resistance grew fainter and fainter, as she listened to Charles whilst he arranged a kind of plan for their future way of maintenance.

This being at length satisfactorily settled, Charles proceeded the next morning to take the necessary measures for carrying it into execution. As for his engagement with Richard, of course there must be an end of that, and he thought he knew a way of coming out of it handsomely.

When Mr. Dallaway had nearly finished his arrangements, he thought it would be proper just to call on his grandmother one day, and tell her of the change in his prospects.

"My dear!" said she, as Charles one day opened the cottage door, "how glad I am to see your face!"

"Ah, no wonder at that," he said, trying in vain to see the whole of his face at once, in a looking-glass about six inches long, by four, which hung against the wall in a red-painted frame. "No wonder at that! there are other people glad to see my face besides you, though, Grandmother," he added with a significant look.

"What's in the wind, now, I wonder," answered grandmother; "there's something you've *got to tell me*, as sure as I sit here. Charles,"

she added, with a penetrating look, "you're never thinking of getting married?"

"And why not I, as well as all the rest?"

"Why, for a good reason; because you've got nothing to marry upon, and nothing to furnish a house with!"

"That's more than you can tell, Grandmother! how do you know I'm not going to marry a fortune?"

"It would be a mighty conceited thing of you, that's what I should say, to go and offer yourself and your empty pockets to a young woman with a fortune; I'd wait a bit, Charles, and get enough to furnish the house first, any how."

"Well, Grannie, you may set your heart at rest; the girl I'm going to marry hasn't a far-thing."

Grandmother looked exceedingly grave, and darned her stockings very attentively for a minute or two. "Well, then, I hope she's a fortune in herself, and knows how to save money, if she don't bring it with her; and that's what we mustn't expect in our line of life."

"Why, Grannie, you don't seem very well pleased, either way," said Charles. "I don't know about saving, but she'll help to bring money into the till, and that's a part of my plan; now listen. I've taken a small house in Millham, with a shop front; not a great way from here;

there's a considerable population rising up all round there, which will be sure to bring plenty of customers, who are now a long way from the mercer's shop at the other end of South-bridge; and there's no mercer's shop on this side the bridge, yet, you know." (The plan was originally Richard's, but Charles found it convenient to forget this;) "and, this little wife of mine, that is to be, she's been regularly apprenticed to a milliner and dress-maker, and she's to carry on a millinery room up stairs; she's just the person for it, such pretty manners; you'll like her, Grandmother, I'm sure you will."

After deliberately drawing her needle backwards and forwards through the stocking a few times more, grandmother took off her spectacles and looked in Charles's face. "Well, I don't know as it seems altogether a bad plan," she said; "if you've laid by anything to begin business with; but I should hardly have thought that, yet?" she added inquiringly.

"That's my affair," said Charles; "I know what I'm about, depend upon it."

Grandmother looked a little hurt at Charles's short answer; for, as she often said, "Charles had always been just like her own;" but she said nothing, and after thinking over the plan in silence for a few minutes she began, "Ah, South-bridge and Millham are almost like one now;

but when I first came to live in this cottage, (that's fifty years ago, come St. Thomas;) it stood a mile out of Southbridge; and a beautiful walk over the green there was to it. Well, and now who is it you're going to marry, my dear? one that'll make ye a good wife, I hope."

"You must guess," said Charles.

"Why I don't know half the lasses I see go by here of a Sunday? I don't know as I even know the name of any, but one; that's she that walks out with Mr. Richard Morgan; poor fellow!" she added with a sigh, and a shake of the head, which Charles didn't quite comprehend, as Grannie seemed entirely in the dark as to the state of affairs.

"Oh but," said Charles, a little confused, "suppose that young lady you mentioned, happened to prefer me, after all, who's to blame?"

"It's never Anne Hardman?" asked Grannie in dismay.

"It is Anne Hardman," said Charles.

"Then I think young folk are very different to what they used to be when I was young," said Grannie. "I should never have thought, afore I was married, of walking out with more than one; no, never; I shouldn't have thought I was worth the having, if I had."

"But everbody isn't like you, you know, Grandmother."

This little bit of flattery softened down the old lady's indignation a little, at the proceedings of the present generation; besides, her curiosity was not quite satisfied yet. "And when is it to be?" she asked.

"It won't be long first, I dare say," Charles answered.

"When the banns are asked out, I suppose?" said the old lady with a smile, "and you'll be married at St. George's, of course?" she added; "that's the Hardmans' parish, aint it?"

"I'm not going to be married at any church at all," said Charles. "My dear!" said his grandmother with a start.

"People are not obliged to be married at church now, you know; you can be married by civil contract, at the Register Office."

Grandmother lifted up her hands and eyes; she could not speak for a minute, but at last she said, "No, Charles, don't; don't, my dear. I've heard talk of people being married, as you call it, that way; but I was told by those that know, it wasn't meant for church folk. Why, the Hardmans! sure those girls have all been brought up to go to church? and so were you, and I ought to know, for I brought you up myself; but I'm afraid, Charles, you haven't always been so regular at church as you used to be when you lived with me."

"Ah! Grandmother; you taught me a great many things when I was a child, that I see in a different light now; though I thank you for it all the same. I know you meant it all for my good."

"I taught you nothing, Charles," she answered, looking a little angry, "but what was in the Bible."

"That's just what I was thinking of," he answered; "but now I'm a grown man, I find a pretty many things in the Bible I can't understand; and I'm not going to say I believe anything I can't understand—that's all I mean."

"Stop, Charles, stop—have mercy upon my old ears, and never let me hear you say such a thing!" Grannie appeared to be deep in grave and painful thought for a little while; presently, however, she rose from her high-backed chair, put down her spectacles and her stockings on the little round table beside her, and went out into the garden. But in a few minutes she returned, with the blossom of a sweet-pea in her hand. "There, Charles," she said, as she held it up before his eyes, "what do you call that?"

"What; is that one of the sweet-peas I sowed late in the Spring?" he said; and as he spoke Charles took a glance at his grandmother, for he couldn't quite make her out.

"That's one of the sweet-peas you sowed late in the Spring," she repeated; you sowed the seed,

as you know, with your own hands; and now, look at that!" she said, turning the flower about as she spoke; "look at the colours! and smell it!"

"Delicious!" said Charles.

"It's a pretty flower, I always think," said Grannie; "and these little twisting things what it climbs by, and all so curious! Can you explain to me, now," she said, looking at Charles, "how such a flower as this came out of one of those seeds you sowed, little round black things like them?"

"Come, Grandmother," he said, twitching his head impatiently, "I came to tell you about my going to be married; I thought, perhaps, you'd like to hear about it.—What a horrid row those cocks and hens are making!" he added, as he walked to the window.

"My dear, you must have patience with your old Grandmother; I was only going to say—and it's a thing I've often thought of—that we can't understand how a flower comes out of a seed—or how one of those chickens you're looking at there came out of an egg; we can't understand it, I was going to say, and yet we can't help believing it for all that."

"Yes; what I see with my own eyes, I'll believe," said Charles.

"But you can't *understand* what you do see, my dear, that's what I'm saying; so don't say no

more, Charles, don't, that you won't believe nothing but what you can understand—it sounds foolish."

"I'm sure I'm a pattern of patience!" said Charles, fixing his eyes on the ceiling, as he sat down again with a look of resignation. "If you feel satisfied, Grandmother," he continued in a patronizing manner, "that's enough for you; I'm sure I wouldn't disturb your mind for the world; so I'll say no more about it. But really, Grandmother, as to my being married at the Register Office, I assure you it's the commonest thing in the world now-a-days. Perhaps you don't know that marriage by civil contract is a perfectly legal marriage?"

"And God forgive them that made it so! That don't make it right in the sight of the Almighty."

"But what, in the name of wonder, would you have more, I should be glad to know?" said Charles.

"What would I have more? I'd have the blessing of God, Charles; it ain't like *holy matrimony*, and I can't think how you can look for peace and happiness, being married like that!"

"I think you might be a little more moderate in your expressions, Grandmother; it's particularly kind of you, just as I'm going to be married, to say you can't think how I can look for peace

and happiness. Peace and happiness are exactly what I want, for I'm sure I haven't had much yet. I had a dull life enough of it behind the counter at Smith and Fincham's; and then that travelling plan with poor old Morgan isn't half such a pleasant life as I expected; so I'm going to try what being married will do, and being my own master."

"Ah! poor Mr. Morgan!" said the old lady, with another shake of the head.

"By-the-bye, I heard poor old Morgan was ill," said Charles.

"Very ill, indeed, he was," answered Grannie; "he's getting better now, I hope."

"Why, what do you know about it, Grannie?" asked Charles, looking uneasy.

"Self-commendation is no recommendation, they say," answered Grannie; "but for all that I believe it's partly through me he's not a dead man at this minute." Charles listened, almost fearing to hear what might come next.

"I was up with him three nights," continued Grannie; "for the person where he lodges got frightened—as well she might—and knowing I was acquainted with him, she sent and asked me to come and say what I thought of him. 'Mrs. Lock,' says she, 'you've always been a noted nurse—I should be glad to hear what you think of Mr. Morgan, for he's ill in bed—took with the

cold shivers o' Monday night.' So he seems out of himself for joy when he sees me, only he calls me all the time by another person's name, (there's no need to say who,) and, says he, holding my hand between both his own all the time, as if he'd never let me go—'I thought we had parted for ever in this world!' and his hands burnt me like a live coal; so I soon found how it was; his poor head was wandering, and he in a high fever; and I didn't wonder at it neither, when I found how he came home with his clothes all drenched through o' Monday afternoon, and sat three hours in 'em afore ever he'd be persuaded to go to bed, and have a cup of warm gruel."

"But how is he now?" asked Charles, looking alarmed; "will he get well?"

"He's getting better now, my dear—thank the Almighty—but I question how it would have gone with him, if we hadn't sent for Dr. Clarke directly; and, says he, when he'd seen Mr. Morgan, 'Nurse Lock, this is a serious case; and I'm always glad when my patients are under your care; I always say, you know, 'Nurse,' says he, 'that the doctor can only give directions, but the doctor can do nothing without the nurse after all.'"

"But what did Morgan talk about? What did his head seem to run upon most?" asked Charles, nervously.

"That's neither for you to ask, nor for me to tell, my dear," answered the old lady, looking mysterious. "I always make it a rule never to say what I see and hear in other people's houses; when I'm out nursin'; but Mr. Morgan, when he got better, he seemed pleased to think he'd got me to nurse him—he's as nice a young man as ever walked in shoes—whenever he used to come past my door, he'd always step in and have a bit of a chat."

"But," said Charles, "I was just wanting to write to him upon business, is he well enough to read a letter. I want to make arrangements about giving up my share in the travelling speculation, if I can."

"I don't think, by all he said," answered Grannie, looking confidential, "he'd be altogether sorry to give it up hisself; and after this fever it wouldn't be at all a proper thing for him neither; may be it would relieve his mind to find you wished to have done with the business."

"Well," said Charles, "good bye, Grannie; I'll write to Morgan."

"And you won't take amiss, my boy, all your old grandmother said to ye?"

"Grandmother, I hope you'll always say just what you please to me; you've the right to do it, for you've shown me more kindness all my life *than anybody else*." And Grannie felt pleased

to see Charles look back affectionately at her, with a smile and a nod, as he shut the door.

More than three weeks had slipped by before Charles's arrangements were quite completed. His first step had been to borrow money; a bad beginning, it must be allowed; for when a man begins with marrying in debt, the chances are, he will never get clear before the end of his life. With part of this money he stocked his new shop, and when Mr. Hardman, as he happened to pass it one day, inquired of the workmen who were employed in making a few alterations, who was going to open shop there, he answered with a contemptuous grunt on being told it was Mr. Dallaway. But it never entered Mr. Hardman's head to think who was going to be *Mrs.* Dallaway; indeed, Mr. Hardman thought so little about anybody but himself, that the information did not long occupy his thoughts, so that it came like a thunder-clap upon him when Mrs. Hardman welcomed him home to supper one evening, with an open letter in her hand, and a stormy expression of countenance, and asked if she might read a letter to him she had just received, "for there was information in it she thought would surprise him." Mrs. Hardman appeared actually to swell with anger as she prepared to read; and Mr. Hardman turned ashy pale, as his ear caught the word "*information.*"

"Information!" he repeated; "who's been giving information? about what?—why can't you make haste?"

But Mrs. Hardman was not to be hurried; she was in so great a rage, that she seemed to take a pleasure in dwelling deliberately upon the letter, as if it afforded her gratification to supply the fire of her anger with fresh fuel. She dropped the words out one by one, as she read it to her husband, and smiled all the time with that peculiar smile which betokens the highest degree of white rage. The letter was written by Anne, at Charles Dallaway's dictation, from the Railway Hotel of the next town, where the wedding-day was kept, and posted in time for Mrs. Hardman to receive it by that evening's delivery.

"November 27, 1844.

"My dear Mother,

"I almost despair of gaining your forgiveness for the step I have been taking this morning, (and here Mrs. Hardman looked at her husband, to see if he guessed what was coming.) It's what I never should have done if I had thought there was any hope of gaining your permission; but I was sure you would never give leave, which made me afraid to speak. I trust, however, that now it's done, though I'm afraid you and father will be very much displeased at first, that you will one day forgive my marrying without your consent, which I was this morning, at the Register Office. (Here *Mrs. Hardman* laid the letter on her lap for a minute,

and panted for breath; and then she proceeded in an hysterical tone.) But henceforth I promise faithfully to be in all things

“Your dutiful daughter,
“ANNE DALLAWAY.”

“My dutiful daughter!” repeated Mrs. Hardman, with a bitter laugh; “what a blessing it is to parents to have such dutiful daughters!”

Mr. Hardman, who during this time had shown no signs of emotion, and had never moved his eyes from the end of the pipe he was smoking, now held it for an instant between two fingers, whilst he briefly remarked, “The girl’s a fool;” and then, as if he thought he had lost time, he puffed away again, harder than ever.

This silence was extremely irritating to Mrs. Hardman’s excited feelings, and she did what she could to make up for it on her own part by a torrent of lamentations. “How was she ever to lift up her head again, or look anybody in the face! she didn’t know how ever she should! To think of such deceit! going out the same as usual, only that very morning to her work, as she made believe! How nice it will sound, ‘there’s Mrs. Hardman’s daughter married at the Register Office!’ Oh dear, oh dear! and the family so regular at church too, and so respected!” Mrs. Hardman at last talked herself into a frenzy, and finished by “vowing” that

Anne and Mr. Dallaway, "neither one of them should ever darken her door again," and she warned her two other daughters to take no notice of either of them, for "she meant to forget that ever she had such a child!"

But inexcusable as Anne was, Mrs. Hardman deserved a good share of the blame herself, for teaching her daughters no better motive for doing right, than the love of appearing "respectable;" she had been to blame in this, and now that she was wounded just where she felt most acutely, it was no wonder that she writhed under it.

When Charles had dictated Anne's letter, he set himself to the, perhaps, more difficult task of writing to Richard; which it became necessary to do, as Charles was, in fact, breaking the contract he had made with him. The top of Charles's pen retained the marks of his teeth for the remainder of its existence; and it seemed doubtful whether, by the time its services were required, it would not have disappeared altogether. First, he thought he would begin with saying he was sorry to hear Richard had been ill; but, then, feeling a shrewd suspicion as to the cause of his illness, he felt ashamed to say anything about it; and decided it would be better to appear ignorant of the fact: at last, in a happy moment, he hit upon that convenient and am-

biguous word "circumstances," which so often has come to the relief of the distressed.

"My dear Morgan,

"November 27, 1844.

"Circumstances (here followed a long pause; Charles was going to say 'over which I have no control,' but conscience would not let him put that, so he was obliged to remodel the sentence, and presently he resumed,) would probably have obliged us before very long, to give up our travelling speculation, as it is generally reported that a bill will be brought in, as soon as Parliament meets, for a new railroad running just through the line of country we had marked out. (The prospect of this, be it observed, was no nearer than when the partnership began.) I likewise feel that my own health would not be equal to carrying on that sort of life through the winter, so that I hope I shall find no objection, on your part, to what I am going to offer. It's my wish to withdraw from the undertaking altogether; but as I am not the man to do anything unhandsome, I hope you will consider it a fair compensation for breaking my engagement, when I say I am willing to forfeit what little I had invested in the horse and the dog-cart, and my share in what there is left of the small stock we laid in when we started, which I hope you will consider as yours; but if there are any profits in hand from the last journey, which I forget, I should be glad of my share, as soon as convenient, for I'm rather *hard up*—('Shall I tell him I'm married?' thought Charles; 'he must hear it some day, so I will;') and with a mischievous smile in the corner of his mouth, he proceeded:—as I've been getting married, like the rest of the world. No doubt you will be surprised to hear I was

married to your cousin Anne this morning, at the Register Office; and I am going to open business, in a small way just at first, at Millham. (Charles probably thought it better not to allude to the old plan of which he and Richard used to talk, of opening shop there together some day, particularly as it was Richard's idea; and having nothing more to say, he merely concluded.) Hoping to hear from you shortly,

"I am your sincere friend, as ever,

"CHARLES DALLAWAY."

"There, Anne," said Charles, as he put his letter in the envelope, "I've told him; so now you may put your mind at rest; and I never was so glad of any thing in my life, as having got that letter off my mind!" Anne took no notice, but sat with her eyes shut, as if she were asleep.

When this letter reached Richard, he was sitting in an easy-chair by his lonely fire-side, in his dressing-gown and slippers—those slippers of his, the pattern of which he so often had traced with his eye, as he thought of the busy little fingers that worked them in spare hours when the dress-making was laid aside, and remembered the very look and the words with which they were given;—those slippers of his—"had I better leave them off?" thought Richard, as he put up his toe and contemplated the cross-stitch; "no," thought he, "no; I don't think I can." Richard was holding the still unopened letter in *his hand*, as he carried on this little debate with

himself; but he now examined the post-mark and the direction, and almost dropped it when he recognised Charles's handwriting; and his weak invalid hand trembled violently as he opened it. As Richard reached the end of the letter he seized the bell-rope; "bring my other shoes down," he said, in no very gentle voice, to the astonished servant-girl, as he kicked off, first one slipper, and then the other, to the furthest corner of the room. "You may make a present of those to the first person you see," he said; and the astonished waiting-maid and the objectionable slippers disappeared together.

Love, and anger, and a determination no longer to cherish his former feelings for Anne, now that she was another man's wife, all lent their assistance in kicking off those slippers. "Hoping to hear from me shortly!" said Richard, looking at the letter again—"how in the world am I to write to him!—the audacity of the fellow!"

Richard sank into silence, and then into thought; he had had plenty of time for thinking of late; and in the lonely in-door hours during his slow recovery, he had been trying to school himself to part with his former hopes; but his bodily frame was weak, and his spirits depressed, and he found it was no easy undertaking, under these circumstances, to force his thoughts and feelings out of the channel in which they had so long and

so happily flowed. Richard, however, was not a man to shrink from the task like a coward; and if he were not yet such a good man as he ought to be, he nevertheless used the means which make men good. Go on, Richard, and thou shalt find in time objects on which to set thine heart; perfect ones, and such as never change; the staff on which thou hast been leaning has indeed gone into thine hand and pierced it; but that wound will heal in time, and then with a firmer and a stronger grasp thou wilt lay hold on a hope which will bring thee peace in this world, and more than human tongue can tell thee in the next.

Charles Dallaway's letter, instead of casting Richard down, helped to give him the strength he wanted. Both as regarded Charles and Anne, Richard's upright heart had betrayed him into ill-placed confidence: he had been making mistakes in the choice of his friends, and he was learning a bitter lesson of wisdom. It was clearly necessary that Charles's letter should be answered; but Richard delayed doing so till he had consulted Dr. Clarke as to the expediency of carrying on his travelling expeditions through the winter, as his opinion might occasion an alteration in his own arrangements. Dr. Clarke put a positive stop to the plan, by telling Richard that *if he wished to kill himself, it would be a sure*

way; and Richard being all abroad now, as to his future prospects, at last decided to write to Smith and Fincham, explaining as much only as was necessary of circumstances, dwelling principally on his own illness, and Dr. Clarke's opinion, as his reasons for giving up the travelling plan, and making it his request that they would take him again into their establishment.

Having received a favourable, and "very handsome answer" from Smith and Fincham, who, as usual, "could only be of one opinion," Richard wrote as follows to Charles Dallaway:—

"Mr. Morgan having found it advisable to give up the travelling mercer plan altogether, intends parting with the whole stock-in-trade, including the horse and the dog-cart, and will remit half the proceeds to Mr. Dallaway as soon as the sale is effected, together with half the profits in hand.

"December 2, 1844."

CHAPTER VI.

"A goose, whose feathers surpassed the new-fallen snow in whiteness, proud of this dazzling gift of nature, fancied herself born to be a swan, rather than what she actually was. She separated herself from her equals, and swam alone and majestically around the pond. Sometimes she stretched her neck, and tried with all her might to remedy that want of length which might betray the truth; and then she tried to give it that stately arch which makes the swan so worthy, from its appearance, to be called the bird of Apollo. But in vain; it was too stiff; and with all her trouble she only succeeded in making herself a ridiculous goose, without becoming a swan."—*Translated from Lessing's Fables.*

No one that has not tried it, knows what anxiety attends the opening of a new business. A plan looks very differently sometimes when you think it over, and arrange it beforehand in your own mind, to what it does when you begin to put it into practice. It is trying to the patience, and the temper too, when you are forced to sit behind your counter the best part of a day, staring at the empty chairs you had arranged so nicely for the customers who will not come; and it is provoking to see people stop now and then to look at something in the window, (till you almost make sure you have caught a customer at last,) it is very provoking to see them

stop in this manner—and then pass on. You don't know what to do with yourself; your mind is not sufficiently at ease to enjoy a book—and taking in a daily paper is too expensive—if you can get one lent you when it's two or three days old, you think yourself lucky, because then you seem to yourself as if you were doing something; whilst your eye rests on the paper, though but too often it is with a vacant look, and an absent mind.

Charles Dallaway, at least so knowing people said, had made a fatal mistake in the line of business he was attempting to carry on; and many, from the first, foretold it would be a failure. In a large suburban village, like Millham, with an increasing population, a small mercer's shop would have answered well, if Charles would have been satisfied with a quiet line of business. If he had set out his window with print dresses, at three-and-sixpence the dress, and with calicoes at fourpence and sixpence per yard, and cheap flannels, and smart-looking gauze ribbons at three-halfpence and twopence per yard, and a few tasty ready-made cap-fronts, he would soon have established a connexion, and have realised an independence in the end, (slowly, but surely,) though, perhaps, most of his customers might have only pence and shillings, instead of pounds, to lay out at a time.

But Charles was bent on establishing what he called "a genteel connexion;" and invested a considerable sum of money (most of which, be it remembered, was borrowed) in handsome shawls, and rich silks and ribbons; forgetting that most people in the neighbourhood, who could afford that style of dress, could likewise afford to keep their carriage, and would prefer driving over to the large shops in Southbridge, where there was a much better and larger assortment of goods to be met with than Charles could possibly offer.

Charles found the "dull realities" of shop-keeping, a painful contrast to the visions of happiness he had indulged in, at the prospect of being "master" instead of "man;" he soon began to feel as dissatisfied as ever, and so disappointed not to see his shop so full of what he called "the right sort of customers" as he expected, that if a little girl chanced to be sent by her mother for a ball of cotton, he felt as if he could have flung it at her to relieve the irritation of his mind.

Nor were Charles's matrimonial hopes entirely free from disappointment. If business had prospered, tempers would have been smooth enough; but when things go wrong, only very good people can always keep their temper; and so Charles and Anne found sometimes that married life is made of other things besides sugar and honey. There was one thing, too, that Charles had never

contemplated, which seemed likely to befall him in the course of time, and that was the arrival of a baby; "he was sure he should never endure the sight of it."—But, be that as it might be, when the baby came, Charles could not help feeling exceedingly fond, and even proud of it, and he used to carry it about like a nurse; he grew more really fond of his wife too; and when he was kind, and seemed pleased, Anne wanted nothing else; her life seemed happier now than it used to be; there was something more like sunshine in the house than there ever was before; and the baby-boy, with his innocent face, brought comfort to their hearts.

Time went on; and little Johnnie's progress in those two great accomplishments of walking and talking was so rapid, that his father and mother soon decided he was a very superior child—far beyond any other child of the same age that ever walked or talked. Business now began to get more steady, and by the time Johnnie was about three years' old, Charles's receipts, though not large, were becoming more regular; and though the connexion was not so "genteel" as Charles desired, he seemed likely at this time to do well in a small way, if he could only have got rid of his "ambitious," or in other words, his discontented disposition, and have laid aside his pretension.

With little Johnnie, indeed, Charles was never

discontented; it would have been a hard matter to find fault with Johnnie, or to give him an unkind word; there was something so sweet about his dear face, that everyone who looked on it, loved it; and Johnnie, too, seemed to love whatever he looked on with his kind, soft blue-eyes: his little face was more like an angel's than anything belonging to this world; he was the delight of Grannie's heart; and Johnnie spent many a happy hour at her cottage, sometimes threading daisy-necklaces, as he sat on the step of the door; or linking the dandelion-stalks together in a chain; "the Lord Mayor himself couldn't have had a finer!" as Grannie used to say. Johnnie's greatest privilege was to be allowed to feed Grandmother's thrush; the bird knew Johnnie's little face; and loved it too, anyone would have thought that had heard how he used to sing whenever Johnnie was there. Johnnie was everybody's comfort. When Anne was tired with working all day, and it grew too dark for her to thread her needle, Johnnie would drag her by the hand to take an evening walk; and sweet and soothing were those twilight hours to Anne. And when Johnnie's bed-time came, it was a beautiful sight to see him at his prayers in his little knees with his hands joined together, and his serious eyes looking up to Heaven. It was my Anne that taught him, though, for

Charles had explained to Anne, that saying prayers was "an old-fashioned prejudice;" it was Grandmother that taught him. But Anne liked to see Johnnie at his prayers; for she had been used to say her prayers herself when she was a child—and always, before she was married; and when Charles happened to be in the room, he could not help standing still to look at him.

Charles might have been a happy man now, if he would only have said his prayers, like Johnnie, and have learnt to be contented. But that was not Charles's way; he had set his heart on rising in the world. And now his head was full of a new scheme, which he thought would astonish "the natives," as he always called the Millham people; a brilliant idea he thought it was, and sure to give him a lift: he did not choose to recollect, that if it should chance to fail, it would most likely sink him altogether.

"I'll tell you what it is, Anne, and no mistake about it," said Charles one morning, as he stood with his hands in his pockets, looking out of the window, or rather trying to do so, between the festoons of lace and ribbon that had been hanging there (undisturbed, alas!) for several days. "I'll tell you what it is—it's this little *poky* window that injures our custom, and I know it is!"

"I don't see any fault-to find with the window," said Anne; "I'm sure it always looks very nice."

"That's only because you don't know what nice is; but I do. I think I just about know how a window ought to look; for wasn't I the only man Smith and Fincham would trust to set out the windows the last three years I was there?"

"Well," said Anne, "I often used to notice how tasty they were set out."

"Then you showed your discernment, Anne; but the style at Smith and Fincham's window isn't what it used to be; it's been what I call a very inferior style this long time past. But I was going to say, Anne, what's the use of a man like me throwing away all my taste and trouble on a window like this?—why, it's so small on the outside, (more like a private dwelling-house window,) that anybody might pass by and never notice it; and that's why it is, and no doubt about it, that we don't get so much of the right sort of custom as we should."

"Well, what's the use of tormenting yourself, and me too, about the window being too small? it won't make it any bigger, I suppose. People must have very bad eyes if they can't see that pink ribbon, and that shot-silk dress."

"I tell you, Anne, it's all thrown away; and

"I'll have the window out, as sure as I stand here, and put in a new front!"

"A new front!" cried Anne, aghast; "why, Charles!—and we in debt now!"

"I don't care for that; there's nothing to be done without a little speculation. My landlord won't do it, for I've asked him, so I'll do it myself; speculation's the life and soul of business!"

"Well, Charles, I declare I'm frightened to hear you talk."

"Ah," said Charles, "when it's all done, and you begin to see the Squire's carriage, and the Clergyman's four-wheel, and all the other carriages standing before our door, you'll allow I was the best judge. I'm now going to walk into Southbridge, to give orders about it. There, look; I shall have a large window thrown out, the whole width of the shop; plate glass, and bound with brass, ten inches wide at least, across the bottom, with my name on. That's the sort of thing!"

Charles whistled as he brushed his hat, (a point about which he was very particular,) and then Anne watched him from the window till she saw him take the turn to Southbridge.

What an invaluable art is that same whistling accomplishment! It answers all purposes, and suits every mood. If a man is well off, and getting up in the world, he whistles because he's

merry; and if a man is poor, and finds it hard to get along, he whistles to keep up his spirits. If a man is idle, he whistles for something to do; and if he is busy, he whistles to help himself on with his work. When a boy goes back to school after the holidays, he whistles to seem as if he did not care; and Charles whistled now, to seem as if he were confident of succeeding in his speculation.

The words of the tune Charles had been whistling, came to Anne's mind with something like a sad foreboding, as the sound died away on her ear:

"Mid pleasures and palaces though we may roam,
Be it never so humble there's no place like home."

"Poor Charles," said she, thinking aloud, "it isn't a humble home that'll do for him, he always wants to be so grand; it'll be the ruin of us all, I know; and we shan't have ever a home at all soon, if he goes on like this." The tune had made Anne sad, so she laid by her work a few minutes, and began to play on her little accordion, to drive away dull thoughts; for Anne had a nice ear for music, and she could play a good many tunes. She tried a merry one, and then another; but they did not seem to suit her, and almost without thinking she found herself playing over that old tune of "Home, sweet home;" and Johnnie sat and listened. "I like that

tune, Mother," he said; "play it again!" But Anne answered, "Poor Mother must go to work again, Johnnie; she mustn't play any more now." For many a day, indeed, Anne's needle was busy now getting things ready, under Charles's directions, to put in the window when the shop was opened again.

Considerable attention was attracted by the putting in of the new front: it was quite "the talk" of Millham for a long time. One day as Mrs. Bolton and Mrs. Price, who were two labouring men's wives, chanced to meet near the shop, Mrs. Bolton declared to Mrs. Price, "she should be afraid to set foot in it, now it was all so grand; it was only fit for gentlefolk."

"Well," said Mrs. Price, "I did venture in one day for a yard or two of calico as I wanted, just to mend my husband's shirts; (labouring men, you see they soon wear anything out, and the shirts haven't been new, not long.) 'Well,' says I, 'Mr. Dallaway, I want a yard or two of stout calico, if you please;' so he did tear it off, to be sure; but he looked all the time as much as to say it was too much trouble to wait on such as me; and it'll be long enough afore I go there again, I can tell 'e!"

These were the kind of customers Charles would have made it his study to please, if he had been a wise man; but instead of that, he was

driving them all away. Just then the Squire's carriage drove past: and the Squire's wife and daughters admired themselves and their handsome equipage, reflected full length in the plate-glass window, as the carriage rolled by; and the Squire's coachman just moved his elbow as he passed the shop, and remarked to the footman beside him on the box, "Mark my words, Thomas, if that don't turn out a bad speculation; who do you think would go to spend their money there when there's a shop like Smith and Fitcham's at the other end of Southbridge, not two miles on?" How provokingly the round, even roll of those carriage-wheels sounded in Charles's ears as day after day, it passed by without stopping: one day, indeed, it did stop; and Charles sprang to the carriage door, quite elated that Mr. Needham the baker (who was standing at his door on the opposite side of the way) should see what genteel custom he had.

"What can I have the pleasure of showing you this morning, Ladies?" said Charles, with a more nervous bow.

"Can you match me this silk in a threepenny ribbon?" said the Squire's lady.

This no: in vain Charles fetched the ribbon drawers to the carriage: in vain the ladies looked them over and over: "it was the only colour he was quite out of:" and it was quite impossible to

persuade these ladies that a contrast would do as well as a match ; in vain Charles inquired " what was the next article he could have the pleasure of showing them ? " and worst of all, as he entered the shop, quite downhearted, he heard the Squire's lady give orders to drive on to Southbridge to Smith and Fincham's.

" That's always the way ! " said Charles ; " the only colour I hadn't got ! how provoking ! very likely if I'd had that, they'd have asked for something else, and it might have helped to establish a genteel connexion ! "

This is but a specimen of the life of disappointment Charles endured for about half a year after the new front was put in ; and many were the bitter words he gave poor Anne, as if everything that went wrong was her fault.

" I thought," said he, as he got up from his desk one afternoon, with a moody look and a wrinkled brow, " I thought your millinery was to have been an attraction to the ladies ; and instead of that, I do believe it's that *dowdy* cap there," (and he hooked one of the caps off a stand in the window with the end of his yard measure,) " I do believe it's that *dowdy* cap that's been sticking up there so long, that frightens the people away. There, don't stick that up any more, it's only fit for a scare-crow ! "

Anne felt provoked beyond all patience ; for

she had bestowed a great deal of trouble on this cap: Charles was very unjust, too, because the millinery had been bringing in more, lately, than the mercery.

"Perhaps," she answered angrily, "you'd better make a present of it to the chimney-sweepers, against May day! That's all the gratitude you've got to show! when I'm wearing out my eyes and my fingers every day, and all day long, to try and keep on the business!"

"I should have thought," said Charles, "you'd have been glad to have a little more to do, instead of complaining you're over-worked."

Johnnie crept to his mother's side, and looked up in her face with great concern; "Mother," said he, "are you crying?"

Charles did not appear to hear Johnnie's question; but he turned his back to Anne, and seemed to be engrossed again in casting up accounts. At last he shut up the ledger with a slap, put on his hat, and walked out. Anne ran to the window to watch which way he went, and saw him take the turn towards his grandmother's.

"Well, my boy!" said the good old lady, (it is impossible to say why she always called Charles 'her boy,' though he was at least seven-and-twenty; whilst, on the contrary, she generally addressed little Johnnie as 'my man,')—"well, *my boy!* what a time it is since you came to see

your old grandmother! you've been busy up at the shop, I take it—eh?"

"That's just what I haven't, Grandmother; it's a dull time for business; and I've got out of heart; and I'm come down to you for comfort."

Grandmother thought by his voice and manner there was something amiss; she had been like a mother to him from a baby, and she knew every tone of his voice and every look so well, it would have been in vain to try to deceive her. "Now, my dear boy," said she, "with a kind, but penetrating look, "there's something gone wrong with ye, there's no need to tell me that."

"Everything's gone wrong with me," said Charles, "and if you don't help me, Grandmother, I'm a ruined man, and that's what I came to talk about. Will you save me from ruin? you can, if you will, and be none the worse off in the end."

"I save ye from ruin, Charles! sure you're better off than I am!"

"I'm a ruined man, I tell you;" and with a hoarse, unnatural voice Charles continued, "Grandmother, you've saved money, I know; and I'm come to borrow it; of course you'll have no objection to lend me what you've got, if I give you a written 'Promise to pay?' the drops stood on his forehead from pure anxiety of mind, as he waited breathless for his Grandmother's answer.

Poor old Grandmother! it was a hard struggle

for her ; it was her little all Charles asked for, that she had laid up against old age. " But, my dear, my money's all in the funds ! that was the safest place to put it in, as I was told by them that knew."

" You can sell out, can't you ?"

" But what's your poor old Grandmother to live upon ? you can't pay me as good interest as I get now ; and that's all I've got to pay my rent ; it is but little my washing brings me in, besides ; and I can't expect, at my age, to be always able to do as I have done."

" I can pay you the same interest, I tell you ; and I will. I promise faithfully, I will, if you'll only let me have the use of the money ; it will save me from ruin ; and you will be no worse off, either ; for I shall soon be getting into a good line of business now, and be able to pay back all you've lent me before long ; of that I feel confident. If you like to see me lodged in gaol, of course you can refuse to let me have the money ; and there's where I must go, if you don't."

Poor, kind old grandmother ! the idea of seeing her " dear boy" lodged in gaol, was too shocking to think of. Charles saw his purpose was almost gained, so he took a pen and ink, and drew up a hasty document, in which he named £150 as the sum he wished to borrow.

"There, Grandmother," said he, offering her the paper; "there's my note of hand; the sum I've named is a hundred-and-fifty pounds, which I believe it's in your power to lend me; you'll let me have it, won't you? and I'll leave this in your hands. As for interest, depend on it, it shall be paid punctual, and you shall never want for anything. I'll arrange it all, if you'll leave it to me."

"You know, Charles, you've been always like my own; and if it's all as you say, I'd sooner starve than see you go to—" but grannie could not bring herself to speak that shocking word "gaol," so she only said, "you shall have the money; but remember it's my all;—all my own savings too;"—and she turned round to give the fire a stir, that Charles might not see her wipe her eyes; "The Almighty won't forsake me," said she to herself as she wiped the tears away, "nor He never has."

"There's a good Grannie!" said Charles; "I knew you'd never have the heart to see me go to prison; it's taken a load off my mind. I can't ever thank you enough, I'm sure, I feel so grateful. Come, you must come and drink tea with Anne and me, and little Johnnie this afternoon. You need not say anything to Anne, you know, because she knows nothing."

Grandmother put on her bonnet and went

with him. "My time mayn't be long here now, perhaps," she said; "if I could only see you different, Charles, I shouldn't care."

Charles was not sorry when the walk came to an end, as under present circumstances he felt rather uncomfortable alone with his grandmother; "Anne," he said, as he placed Grannie in the arm-chair in the back-parlour, "here's Grandmother come to tea!"

Anne's eyes looked very red, as she raised them from her work, and Charles's heart smote him. "Anne," he said, "I was cross this afternoon, I was put out; come, you know I'm always sorry after it's over."

"I don't care for anything, Charles, if you'll only be kind," Anne answered.

"Now Johnnie," cried Charles, "come and sit on my knee; and I'll teach you to whistle like Grandmother's thrush." And Charles whistled as if he had not a care in the world.

CHAPTER VII.

"The night is past, and shines the sun,
As if that morn were a jocund one."

The Siege of Corinth.

BUT in spite of Charles's prophecies about the wonderful effects of the new front, business grew more and more slack every month, and people's tongues began to be more and more busy about his affairs. "What do you think of Master Dallaway, over there?" said Mr. Needham the baker to the postman one morning; "I don't think he seems to be getting up in the world exactly—eh?"

"I question whether it isn't down in the world he's going, instead of up," said the postman; and pretty fast too;—he's had some awkward-looking letters lately—that's all I know."

It was but too plain that the business was not thriving, and Anne began to get anxious and fidgetty. Charles had taken to whistling a great deal lately; and she had observed that when Charles whistled much, it was a sure sign that things were going wrong; and worst of all, Charles had lately got a habit of staying out very late in the evening.

"Twelve o'clock!" said Anne to herself, one night as she sat straining her eyes to make a black bonnet by the light of one candle. "Twelve o'clock, and Charles not at home—oh dear!"—and tired and worn out, she fell into a doze. She was waked by the clock striking "two"—but Charles was not come in.—"Tick-tick" went the clock for another hour, till Anne got so nervous she hardly knew how to bear the sound of it; it seemed to tick so much louder than usual; it sounded so solemn too, and everything else was so still. Once she thought she heard him; a footstep passed the window, and some one laid hold of the handle of the house-door; but the footstep passed on again with a slow and measured tread; it was only the police-man trying the handle to see if all were right. At last Anne went upstairs, and opened the window, and listened; but she could hear nothing but the thumping of her own heart, and little Johnnie's gentle breathing, as he lay in a still, deep sleep. It was now near four, and the dawn began to show through the window-curtains; how strange the bed looked, in that grey light, all fresh made-up, and undisturbed, just as it looked over-night. Anne waited till six; and the cheerful morning sun streamed in on Johnnie's head, as she once more drew the curtain aside to look out of the window, and hastily closed it again, lest the light

should wake him ; for Johnnie must not be waked yet. Anne could wait no longer now, but she put on her bonnet, just stopped to kiss Johnnie as he lay so quiet and peaceful, and hurried away to Grandmother's.

"Have you seen Charles, Grandmother?" said Anne.

"My dear!—what's the matter?—you here by six o'clock!"

"The matter is that Charles hasn't been home all night;"—and she sank down on a chair.

"Oh, Grandmother—what's to become of me!"

"My dear," said Grandmother, (and she looked very grave,) "by all I hear, I'm afraid he's been rather often lately at the tap at "the Six Bells;" may be he forgot hisself last night, and wasn't able to get home."

"Oh Grandmother, will you go and see? I couldn't go myself, not for the world."

Grandmother felt greatly distressed and annoyed at having to go on such a disgraceful errand; the sight of Anne's agony, however, urged her to do it. But Grandmother went on her errand in vain. Charles had been at "the Six Bells" every night for a week past, and, as the landlord said, had "run up a long score there;" but that night he had not been near the place.

Anne said but few words, and she hurried

home; lest Johnnie should wake, and be frightened to find himself alone in the house.

"I shall look in by-and-by, Anne, to see if you've heard anything," said Grandmother, as Anne parted from her; he'll be back in the course of the morning, I dare say;—don't you fret yourself so."

The morning wore away, and dinner-time came; but Charles did not come home. And evening crept on—and supper-time;—still Charles did not come.—And Johnnie's bed-time came, and Johnnie wanted to say "good night," to father. "Father's out," Anne answered hastily; and as she lifted him into bed, she added in a softer tone, "You're my only comfort, Johnnie;—kiss poor Mother."

"Poor Mother!" said Johnnie, in a sympathizing tone; but Johnnie did not at all understand what was the matter, and he fell asleep with as little care for to-morrow as a bird in its nest.

One more sad night went by, and morning came again, but daylight gave Anne no comfort: it gave her no comfort, but it put an end at last to her suspense, for it brought her a letter from Charles with the Liverpool post-mark outside, the contents of which were as follow:—

“Liverpool, July 28, 1850.

“Dear Anne,

“When you get this I shall be many a mile away on the great sea; but I think when I’ve explained all I’ve got to say, you will allow that this is the wisest step I could have taken, as regards you as well as me. So don’t give way too much, for if all is well we shall meet again before very long. No doubt you must have guessed that I’d got something to trouble my mind of late; and so I had—enough, and more than enough. You see, Anne, the fault was, my marrying and beginning business without any capital; for I was obliged (though I never told you about it at the time) to borrow money to purchase stock when I first opened shop; intending to pay it back, a little at a time, if the business answered; but, as you know, instead of that, the speculation did not succeed so well as I wished; and so, by way of a last effort, I put in the new front, which, of course, was expensive; and as, contrary to all my expectations, business seemed to get worse instead of better after that, and the creditors began to get impatient, I was obliged to borrow again, to pay off the bills, and what I borrowed at starting as well. But this is the worst part of the whole, Anne, and what weighs heaviest on my mind—it was grandmother’s savings I borrowed—her all, as I may say—a hundred and fifty pounds. I told her I should be a ruined man if she didn’t let me have the money. I persuaded her, and I did what I could to persuade myself, that business would be sure to be looking up in a little while, now the new front was in, and I hoped for the best.

“What could I do more than I have? and yet the business has kept continually going down. So as it seemed I could do no good with staying in England, I thought I

could not do wiser than pay half the bills instead of the whole, promising to pay the other half before long (which, of course, I shall do as soon as I am able,) and so I contrived to save enough out of grandmother's money to pay my passage out—which is about twenty-six pounds, (as I am going out in a ship that does the thing economical,) and that includes provisions, and a doctor if I'm ill, which I trust I shan't want, and everything else; and I shall have a trifle left to set me going when I land in Australia—for that's where I'm bound. And now, that you mayn't think I was such a villain as to go and leave you and Grandmother to want, I've left thirty pounds behind of the money Grandmother lent me, for you and her to go on with at present, which you'll find in the Japan money-box underneath the counter—and you know where the key of the padlock is; and after a bit, I feel confident I shall be able to send you a fresh supply—and people know my grandmother, and they won't press you, if you say you're expecting supplies from me shortly.

“Now, Anne, I think you must see this is the only thing I could have done; and, after a bit, I shall either come back a rich man, or may be, I shall send for you and Johnnie to come out too, if I seem likely to make a better living out there. So farewell, and don't fret.

“I am your loving husband,

“CHARLES DALLAWAY.”

“P.S.—I shall write to you as soon as I land and have looked about me a little, and tell you where to direct your letters. My love to Johnnie, and my grandmother; and tell her I'm doing all this in hopes to be able to pay her the sooner. I thought it best to say nothing to you till I was gone; because I knew you would be persuading *me off it*, and then I should have got angry—so I thought

it was better to part friends. You had better try and keep on the business a little, if you can, till you hear more from me.

"Yours, C. D."

Anne sat with her eyes fixed on the letter like a person that has been stunned. The first thought that struck her was, that Charles could not care much for her, or be very fond of her company, if he could make up his mind to do without her, and go away and leave her, like this; and she looked through the letter again for some little kind expression of sorrow at being parted, but she looked in vain. For the truth was, that though Charles was really fond of Anne, he was more fond of himself; and when he wrote the letter he was thinking about nothing but getting safe off to Australia, out of the reach of his creditors; and with that want of consideration for the feelings of others, which selfish people always show, he quite forgot how poor Anne, in her loneliness, would have been comforted, if he had expressed something of the sorrow which he truly felt at being parted from her and Johnnie. It was thoughtless of Charles not to say a word to Anne about "how much he should miss her, and how much he should long for the time when they should meet again"—words which Anne would have thought over and over till she found comfort in them. But Charles will soon have time to *think of others as well as himself*, when

he finds himself on the great sea, with miles and miles, and more of them every day, between him and all he left behind ; when he finds himself quite amongst strangers, he will begin to long after those kind hearts that knew him, and cared for him at home.

But when Anne read this hurried letter, she persuaded herself that Charles had grown tired of her, and didn't care for her, and wished to get rid of her ; and the many hasty words he had given her of late, when the ill success he met with had put him out of humour, she laid to the wrong cause ; and as she thought them over, she began to feel sure that Charles had left her for good.

Poor Anne ! if truth must be told, sullenness was the temper to which she seemed most inclined to give way ; she was sullen even with Johnnie, and seemed not to see any of the pretty ways by which he tried to gain her notice.

As long as Charles was at home, and Anne had to think how to please him, and as long as there seemed some hope left that they should get along better in time, her spirit had never quite given way ; but now, trouble, and troublesome thoughts, all seemed come together ; and she sat there the picture of dejection. " How was she to carry on the business alone ? She had always *left it all* to Charles, and understood very little

about it; how was she to carry it on alone?" There sat poor Anne with these troublesome thoughts in her mind, and her eyes fixed on the open letter.

It was, indeed, cruel of Charles, and unmanly, and unprincipled, and cowardly, to leave his old grandmother and his wife, and his little helpless child, like this. And yet he said it was "the wisest thing," and "the only thing he could have done." Why could he not have paid the whole of his debts, instead of half of them, with what his grandmother lent him? A hundred and fifty pounds would have covered them all at that time; and when business did not seem likely to thrive any better, he might have sold off and closed his shop—that would have gone a long way towards repaying his grandmother; he might have tried to get a situation again at Smith and Fincham's, (they would have been glad to have him back,) and though it might have been some time before he paid off the whole of the debt, he might have contrived to do it by being very saving, before many years passed away, and have been an honourable man, with a light heart, at the end.

But after having a shop of his own, Charles was too *grand* to serve in another man's establishment; besides, if he had closed his shop, it would have seemed like owning to everybody that he *had made a mistake*, and had failed in

his speculations—and Charles was too proud for that. Yes, dear reader, you may well wonder what Charles had to be proud of; for he was very silly, and very vain, and very discontented, and always wanting to seem of more consequence than he really was, and very much wanting in judgment, too; but, then, it is exactly silly, vain, discontented people who usually show most pride. But you think he was too poor to be proud? Surely, dear reader, there is as much pride oftentimes amongst those who are poor, and those who have to earn their bread, as there is amongst rich and independent people—pride is a weed that thrives in all soils.

It is hard, indeed, to say what good reason Charles could have given for thinking himself above seeking employment in Smith and Fincham's establishment, when there were so many upright and honourable men, maintaining themselves in the same way, and some of them even helping others besides. But so it was. Charles was too proud to offer himself again at Smith and Fincham's. And now what is to become of Anne and her boy, and what is to become of the good old grandmother?

For a time Charles had paid his grandmother (though not very regularly) the same interest she had always had for her money; about one-and-ninepence a-week, which just covered her rent;

and by taking in washing she made up about three shillings more ; that was all she had to live upon, and she said it was " plenty." But when the thirty pounds Charles left behind shall be all gone, (and between Anne and grandmother it must come to an end before a great while,) how is poor Grannie to get along, with nothing to look to but the three shillings a week her washing brings her in, to pay her rent and everything else ?

Poor Anne, too : five pounds was owing for a quarter's rent and taxes already, and another quarter would soon be due—that will take away ten pounds out of the thirty ! It was cruel of Charles to go away and leave them like this.

Poor Anne ! she could find no comfort in the letter, so at last she folded it up and put it in her pocket ; then she hastily seized her bonnet and shawl, and putting little Johnnie's hat on his head, she took him by the hand and went out.

" Are we going for a walk, Mother ?" said Johnnie ; but Johnnie got no answer.

" Mother, are we going down to Grandmother's ? and shall I go and get my spade, and dig up a little sod of grass to put in the thrush's cage ?"

But Anne did not seem to hear Johnnie's prattle ; or, at least, she did not notice it, so Johnnie tried again. " Grandmother said I was

to be sure and bring her a nice fresh sod the next time I came, Mother."

"Be quiet, Johnnie, and don't chatter so," said Anne; and Johnnie was silent: the corners of his pretty mouth drew down a little, and he walked on by his mother's side, looking as if he were in grave meditation, till they reached grandmother's cottage; he looked as if he were thinking how unjust it is in grown-up people to revenge themselves on little helpless children when things go wrong with them.

"Well! my man," said grandmother, as she opened the door, "have you brought a nice fresh sod for the bird, this morning?"

This was too much for Johnnie; his feelings had been exceedingly hurt, and two large tears, which were standing in his soft blue eyes, ran over and rolled down his cheeks.

"Why, my man! Sure your're never going to cry?"

"Grandmother," said Anne, impatiently, "never mind, Johnnie, now—I want to speak to you."

"Directly, my dear; there Johnnie," continued Grannie, as she opened the garden door and turned him loose amongst the gooseberry bushes; "go and get some ripe gooseberries!" and seeing that Johnnie's spirits were in a fair way to become more composed, she hurried back to Anne.

"Come, Grandmother, you don't care for me, and all my troubles," said Anne.

"It ain't that, Anne, it ain't that, and you know it; but I can tell by your looks there's no good news, and I'm almost afear'd to ask."

"Read that," said Anne, as she took the letter from her pocket. Grandmother's hand trembled so when she saw the letter, that she was longer than usual before she could get her spectacles on; she was obliged to stop to wipe the tears from them, too, once or twice before she got to the end of it; and when she had finished it, she looked up over them with an inquiring glance at Anne, to see which way she took this letter.

Anne was sitting with both her elbows on the little round table, and her face hid in her handkerchief: the tears were beginning to flow, (for she knew she was come to one that would share her trouble,) and the tears having once found their way, she sat and wept as if her heart would break. "It's being a widow, and worse than a widow," she sobbed out; "he never means to come back, depend on it, nor send for me neither; he begins to feel what it is to have a wife and child to maintain, and he thinks he shall get along better without us—that's how it is, I know."

"Give me the letter again," said Grandmother: "why look here, Anne; he says, 'if all

is well we shall meet again before very long ;' and near the end of the letter, too, he says, 'after a bit, I shall either come home a rich man, or may be I shall send for you and Johnnie to come out too.' Poor old Grandmother's worst off ; he don't say he'll send for me ; I'm too old for that, and I shall never see him no more in this world, may be ;" and she wiped her eyes with the corner of her apron.

But Anne shook her head impatiently as she sat with her face still buried in her handkerchief ; "of course," she said, "such expressions as those go for nothing at all ; what did 'some day,' and 'after a bit,' mean ?—she understood what they meant very well—they meant just nothing at all."

It was a difficult task, as it always must be, to try and console a person who had been living, as you might say Anne had for a long time past, without any religion at all ; and grandmother did not attempt to preach her a sermon, or even to find a single fault with her, then ; she hoped trouble might send Anne to her prayers, but she thought a word of kindness and a cup of tea were the best things for her just at that minute.

"There, my dear ; a cup o'tea will do you good ; and now, Anne, for Johnnie's sake as well as your own, try and bear up, and keep on the *business* ; may be more o'the gentlefolk may

come now, by way of helping you on a bit; poor Johnnie, he looks to you so; you must try and be pleasant with him, else he'll break his little heart. It's a dark cloud that's come over us now, Anne, but that's no reason why the sun shouldn't shine out another day." Grannie never said a word about her savings being all gone, and the little chance there was of her seeing the money again; she only said, "it's a dark cloud that's come over us;" but Anne never seemed to remember that grandmother had trouble to bear as well as herself, and she returned to her hopeless, unhappy home, leaving Johnnie behind to comfort himself a little longer amongst the gooseberry bushes.

CHAPTER VIII.

"Oppress'd with grief, oppress'd with care,
A burden more than I can bear,
I sit me down and sigh."

Burns.

To sit still and do nothing, with such troubles on her mind as Anne had, was not to be endured; and if she tried to work at her needle, she soon found herself with her work lying on her lap, and her eyes wandering to the window; for it

did not seem yet, as if Charles were really gone : they had never said "good-bye" to each other, and the last time she saw him go out, he looked much the same as he always did ; and so every time any one passed the window, Anne turned her head, almost without thinking, and looked out ; and then the sorrow all came fresh over her again ; and at such times she would take out the letter and once more read it through. "You had better try and keep on the business a little, if you can, till you hear more from me," she repeated aloud one day, as she read the last line of the postscript, and put the letter in her pocket again ; and as if it were a relief to her still to have something to do in compliance with Charles's wishes, she began to alter the arrangement of the things in the window, as Charles used to do every morning when he was at home. But poor Anne paused in her employment as she opened a box of beautifully white-looking widows' caps, and began pinning them up one behind the other, to a tape in the window ; she had seen Charles do this a hundred times, and thought nothing about the widows' caps, except how many they should be likely to sell ; but now, as she held one in her hand, she looked at it for a minute ; "Johnnie," she said at last with a sigh, "I think one of these caps would suit poor mother now." But Johnnie pushed away the cap ;

"Take it away," he said, "I don't like that cap, Mother."

For some days Johnnie never failed to ask at dinner-time, "where's Father?"—and a short sullen answer, "Father's out," was the only reply poor Johnnie could get. But Anne could not hide the truth for ever; so at last, when Johnnie asked again "where's Father?" Anne answered gravely, "Father's gone away, Johnnie."

"Gone away!" he repeated, as if some thought were awakened in his little mind by the sound of those words; he looked up inquiringly and steadily into Anne's face with his blue eyes, till she thought her heart would break; and then Johnnie asked, lowering his voice almost to a whisper as he crept close to her, "Is Father gone away to Heaven?"

The question startled Anne. "Whatever put such a thing as that into your head, Johnnie?" she asked.

"Grandmother says, I shall 'go away' to Heaven one day, if I'm good," Johnnie answered.

Anne took him on her lap and kissed him; and the tears fell down her cheeks as she said, "Johnnie, I hope you won't go away yet."

Johnnie's thoughts by this time were busy with something else; but Anne pondered long over that question of his, "Is Father gone away

to Heaven?" Supposing Charles should really die, (and who knew whether the ship would get safe to Australia)—would he go to Heaven—was there any reason to think that he, or she herself either, had lived as if they were getting ready to go to Heaven? Anne shuddered, and got up hastily to shake off these thoughts; something whispered to her, (was it an evil spirit?) not to make herself dull with such thoughts, and so she drove them away.

Anne's attention to Charles's injunction, to try and keep on the business a little, seemed not to be thrown away; and she had more custom for the next few weeks, than they had had for as many months before. Anne's misfortune was becoming known; and from various reasons, customers who before had only come occasionally, now came often; and some who never came at all before, came now. The good and the kind came out of a desire to help Anne in this way, by laying out their money with her; and some, Anne thought, came just for curiosity.

"There's that Mrs. Price and Mrs. Bolton," she said to grandmother one day, "there aren't two greater gossips in all Millham and Southbridge put together: when Charles was at home, they never hardly came near the shop; and now, first Mrs. Bolton will come in, just for a reel of *cotton*, or a pen'orth or two of ribbon; and a

day or two after, Mrs. Price wants a knot of piping-cord ; and then they look at me, and hope I find myself pretty well. I've hardly patience to serve them, and that's the truth ; it's just out of curiosity they come, and I'd much sooner be without their custom ; I shouldn't miss it I'm sure."

But people could not be wanting mercery every day ; and though many were anxious and willing to help her, it became painfully clear to Anne as Michaelmas drew on, that she should be behind with her rent. Charles had left thirty pounds in the japan money-box, when he went away in the beginning of June ; five pounds were then owing for a quarter's rent and taxes ; Midsummer-day was close at hand, and when it came Anne paid away ten pounds for two quarters' rent and taxes ; other little bills that had run up swallowed up five pounds more ; so there were fifteen pounds gone out of the thirty. Grandmother, too, had been obliged to have a pound or two, and when Anne counted her money the night before Michaelmas-day, she had only about thirteen pounds left in the japan box ; for the little she took in the shop was never quite enough to cover the weekly bills, and it was impossible to lay any thing by. The next day five pounds more must go, and eight pounds will be all Anne has left in the world ; and of that, too, grandmother must

have a share. "Should she give notice to leave at St. Thomas's day?" thought Anne to herself; but then in a smaller house, or supposing she hired a couple of rooms somewhere, there would be no shop front most likely; and she might lose the little custom she had; and supposing she could meet with a shop front that she could hire, and so sleep at grandmother's cottage, she should have to pay high for it; and if she could let a lodging herself, perhaps it might answer as well to stay where she was; she would try one more quarter, and stick "Lodgings" up in the window. So Anne had a room upstairs fresh papered, and put in one or two little pieces of furniture, and waited some days with an anxious heart; more than once her hopes were raised by people calling to inquire about the lodging; but everybody that inquired, wanted two rooms: and Anne had only one, furnished. At last, however, a smart-looking middle-aged woman agreed to take the lodging, if Anne would furnish another room for her. Anne gladly closed with these terms, and got in more furniture accordingly.

The lodger told Anne it would suit her best to pay quarterly; and Anne had no objection to this arrangement, as she thought it would be a good thing to have the money in a lump, towards paying the rent. But the day before St. Thomas's, the smart-looking middle-aged woman suddenly

disappeared, leaving her lodgings unpaid for, and in debt to Anne besides for many little things she had got at her desire. To-morrow morning five pounds must be forthcoming for the landlord and the tax-gatherer; and what with Anne's own little weekly bills, and grandmother's wants, and getting in furniture for the lodger, the eight pounds Anne had left on Michaelmas-day, had dwindled down to a few shillings. There was, however, no time to be lost in lamenting over the cruel ways of wicked people like this middle-aged woman; so after Anne had had a good cry at the thought of Charles having left her to struggle on in this way alone, she made up her mind, if she could only raise enough to pay this quarter's rent, she would give notice to leave at Lady-day; for the landlord required a quarter's notice.

Anne looked round as she sat in the room which the middle-aged woman had occupied, (so much to her cost,) and necessity drove her to decide upon doing a thing, which in days gone by she never thought she should be reduced to do. When it got dark, and Johnnie was in bed, she would go down to a pawnbroker's shop, that she remembered seeing in a narrow street in Southbridge, and ask him to let her have five pounds upon the furniture she got in when she let her lodging; she would not tell grandmother,

for she was always so kind and considerate, that Anne was unwilling to vex her with the details of her poverty. Anne once thought of writing to her mother; but Mrs. Hardman had been true to her word, and had never noticed Anne since she married; so her courage failed her, and she determined to help herself whilst she could.

Anne's heart beat quickly as she opened the door that evening, and looked first this way, and then that, to be sure that none of the neighbours saw her; and she hastily drew back within doors again, as she heard a clatter of tongues approaching, and recognized the voices of the two gossips, Mrs. Bolton and Mrs. Price.

"Ah," said Mrs. Price as she passed, "I shan't be surprised any day, to see a smash here." Poor Anne! forsaken as she was by the husband who should have been there to protect and advise her, how harsh and unfeeling those careless words sounded in her ear!—she listened to the *click* of Mrs. Price's and Mrs. Bolton's pattens on the pavement till it got more and more distant, and at last died away, (it was a foggy night, that eve of St. Thomas's, and the fog was beginning to turn to a wetting, drizzling rain), and then Anne locked the door after her, and pulled her veil down over her face, as she set out on *her melancholy errand with trembling limbs,*

and a sense of loneliness and misery in her heart, greater than ever she had felt before.

Anne walked fast ; but it was a long distance she had to go—nearly an hour's walk ; and it was about eight o'clock, when, with a mind somewhat eased by the assurance that at least her present necessity was relieved, Anne stepped out of the pawnbroker's shop, and turned again towards home. Over the shop-door there was a gas-lamp, the light of which shone dimly through the fog ; and as Anne stepped out into the street, the tall, heavy figure of a man, wrapped up in a rough great-coat, emerged from the fog at the distance of only a few yards behind her, coming down the street from the opposite direction. Anne's light figure caught his eye, and he recognized it ; he did not see her face, but the figure of one whom we have once known familiarly, and whose movements we have once loved to watch, is not to be easily mistaken.

Richard Morgan (for it was he) was returning to his lodging by a short cut down the narrow street where the pawnbroker's shop was situated ; but when he recognised his cousin Anne, he followed her at the distance of a few yards, as if to protect her, till he watched her into her own house. As Richard walked past, he heard from within, the sound of a child crying ; and it sobbed *as if it had been crying a long time.* The sound

of this solitary cry, touched Richard's feeling heart; which had already been wounded to see Anne out on such a night, apparently not very warmly clad, and on such an errand.

Yes, Richard's was a feeling heart; but it was an upright one; and he entertained no feelings there for his cousin Anne, which a good man would be ashamed to own. Richard had now had time to see things in a different light from that in which they appeared to him in the freshness of his disappointment, some four or five years ago; he had been able to contemplate Anne's character more calmly, when his judgment was no longer under the influence of that winning manner of hers; he was then better able to see that her apparent kindness, had been nothing more than manner after all; and while making generous excuses for her, on the score of the bad education she had received from her mother, he at the same time acknowledged to himself that he had made a mistake in once thinking that Anne's character was suited to his own; with a bold step he trod again along the path of duty, with his eye on heaven, and he was strong.

The history of Anne's misfortunes was in a great measure known to Richard, for he was a frequent visitor at old Nurse Lock's, and from her he had heard how she had been left by *Charles* to struggle on alone; there, too, he had

sometimes seen little Johnnie; and he and Johnnie were on familiar terms. Anne, he had always avoided meeting; but he had more than once seen Charles Dallaway before he left England, and had forced himself to acknowledge him, though it was but coldly and distantly. Since Charles went to Australia, Richard had regarded him with feelings of righteous indignation, which mounted to a greater height, as he that night saw Anne reduced to visiting a pawnbroker's shop; he required no other information, the fact spoke for itself that Anne's means were exhausted; and without hesitating for a moment, Richard opened his writing-desk as soon as he reached his lodging, and taking out a five-pound note, he inclosed it in an envelope, addressed to Anne on the outside in a feigned hand, and put it in the post, thinking to himself as he did so, "I can make my old coat and hat last another quarter, I dare say."

Far was Anne from guessing the truth, when next morning brought this welcome present; in vain she studied the hand-writing of the direction, it was evidently a feigned hand; there was no clue to guide her—not a line, nor a word; and Anne at last decided that her father and mother had heard of her distress, had been touched by pity, and had sent her this timely relief; "*they* were relenting," thought Anne.

Still, this was only like a drop in the ocean; and it became impossible for Anne to keep on this expensive house, so she gave notice to quit, and moved at Lady Day into a lodging where she had two rooms; there was no regular shop front, but still Anne tried to set out the window of the downstairs room, so as to look pretty well; she often stopped to wipe away her tears though, as she thought how angry Charles would be to see her so come down; and she knew he would not be pleased, if he should chance to come back; and then she looked in the glass and thought how altered he would find her.

But there was little chance Anne thought of Charles ever coming back; he had not even written to her yet; a month ago she reckoned; she might have had a letter from him, but day after day went by, and still no letter came; and the thought began to prey more and more on Anne's heart, that Charles had left her for good: she grew sadder and sadder, so sad that she did not even care now for what the gossips said about her; she was never cheerful even with Johnnie; whose happiest hours were now spent with Grandmother and the favourite tfrush; and then, as Grannie used to say, "he was as happy as a little bee in a lavender bush;" but when he came home, though Anne loved him dearly at heart, *she scarcely seemed glad when she welcomed*

him, for her heart was too heavy ; Johnnie knew not what he missed, but he missed the sunshine of his mother's smile ; and, as the leaves of a plant that grows in the shade, are of a paler hue than those that drink in the quickening rays of the warm sunshine, so Johnnie by degrees grew grave and sad.

Anne had a hard struggle even now to keep her head above water ; and unable to replenish her stock of goods, the window spoke too plainly by its appearance, that she was fast "going down in the world." Those who passed by saw the window worse and worse furnished, week after week ; and then for a long time there was nothing to be seen there but two or three loops of common lace, festooned across and across ; a roll or two of narrow gauze ribbon, and one or two old "fashion-books" laid open, and a few shabby looking artificial flowers.

But the recollection of that five-pound note, and the conviction Anne felt that no one could have sent it but her own father and mother, together with the near approach of pinching poverty, encouraged her to take the bold step of writing a letter to her mother ; "they have enough and to spare," thought she, "and they'll never bear to see me want." So after much deliberation, and many painful reflections, Anne began her letter.

"April 15, 1851.

"Dear Mother and Father,

"I know if you were to treat me according as I deserve, you would never read this letter which I now make bold to write to you. I hope, however, you will not refuse to hear all I have to say, when I tell you that it is nothing else but urgent poverty and distress that drives me to write. I should never have ventured to address you, if it was not for remembering the undeserved kindness which I cannot help thinking I received from you at Christmas; how I should ever have got along till now, without the help of that five-pound note, I don't know. Since that time I have tried hard to support myself, but in vain; and if I was not reduced almost to my last sixpence, I should not write as I do now, imploring you to help me once more, for I have no one else to look to now, though perhaps you don't know that I have for many months past been worse than a widow; and whether I shall ever see my husband again is more than I can say, as he left me to go out to Australia the end of last July.

"No one knows, but myself, how hard I live now, and for a long while past; and though I have strived to support myself, and my only child, (I am sure you would love him if you could only see his innocent face, and may be, forgive me for his sake,) I find it quite impossible to keep myself and him in clothes, and to find us in daily bread, and put by something for the rent as well. When I recollect how comfortably we used to live at home before I took the step I did, I can't help thinking you would grieve to see me and my child going without a bit of meat, sometimes for two or three days in the week, and often forced to have our dinner and tea both in one to save a meal. I should not care for myself, but I can't bear

to see my child get paler and weaker every day; and all because he's pinched for food that I can't give him. I have had, besides all the rest, a great loss by a dishonest lodger, that went away without paying me a farthing; which was very unfortunate for me, so badly off as I was. But if you will assist me this once, I am greatly in hopes that Charles will send me something soon to go on with; or he said he might send for us to go out there. I've no wish to blame him, because I'm sure what he did, he did for the best in going out; but both of us have been very unfortunate ever since we married; and I sometimes think, when I'm sitting alone, and my heart seems pretty near broken, that we brought all on ourselves, and so we ought not to complain, which I don't; only I don't know what to do, nor who to look to if you don't help me, for I never asked charity of any one yet, and I shouldn't know how to do it.

"I should like to send my love to my sisters, and hoping they are well, which I can't altogether say this leaves me at present, I am, ●

"Your dutiful child,

"ANNE DALLAWAY"

It so happened that Richard Morgan was at his aunt's house when this letter arrived. Mrs. Hardman, who had no delicacy of feeling about her, did not stop to reflect what Anne would have thought at having all her necessities and privations published; but, in a great passion at the sight of Anne's name at the bottom, she immediately began, as on a former occasion, to read the letter aloud; making a running comment

all the way through, when anger would let her get breath enough to speak. "She didn't believe a word of it—she didn't; it was nothing but an invention from beginning to end; that, she believed, just to work upon her feelings. *She* send her a five-pound note at Christmas, indeed! she believed she hadn't any five-pound notes to spare; and if she had she should give them to them that deserved them. She should just like to know who could ever have done such a foolish thing—encouraging imprudence, she called it, and nothing else. I'll give her her answer!" said Mrs. Hardman; and without stopping to let her anger cool; without thinking how her words might wound a heart already crushed—she wrote as follows:—

● "April 15.

"If it was not for some mistake about a five-pound note, which I don't understand, I should not have thought proper to answer the letter I got this morning. But I write this once, to beg I may never be troubled any more with such letters, and to say that you must look to them that brought you into trouble, to help you out of it. No five-pound notes, I wish you to understand, have ever come from me or mine, nor ever will; as it's only the deserving and the respectable that I intend to help, and not such as do all they can to bring disgrace on themselves and them connected with them.

"Your afflicted mother,

● "ELIZA HARDMAN."

When Mrs. Hardman had finished her letter, she read that likewise aloud, with an air of self-satisfaction, and followed it up by an impressive glance at her other two daughters, which seemed to say, "take warning, girls;" and she then begged Richard Morgan to be kind enough to post it for her on his way home. Richard felt that if she had asked him to hold his right hand in the fire he could more easily have done it than be the means of adding to Anne's trouble. "Should he suppress the letter?" the thought passed through his mind, but he felt he had no right to do that; and if he had done so, Anne would be almost as much hurt by receiving no answer at all to her letter. Again Richard went to his writing-desk, and taking out the black lid, under which he kept his money, he sat there a few minutes, deliberating. There were no more five-pound notes there; but the thought of Anne and her child in actual want of food, decided Richard, at last, that half-a-sovereign would be better than nothing; so, cutting a slit in a card, he slipped the half-sovereign into it, and directing the envelope again in a feigned hand, he posted that and Mrs. Hardman's letter together.

Anne thought so much and so long over her mother's letter, when she received it by the next post, that she hardly tried to guess where the half-sovereign contained in the other envelope

could have come from her mechanically put it into her nurse : her mother's words had pierced her like an arrow in the quick : all hope that she was recovering was gone, and all chance of aid from that the most natural quarter was at an end. Anne was so engrossed with these thoughts that she scarcely noticed Johnnie as grandmother brought him home that evening : what she had said in her letter to her mother about his pale face was indeed but too true, and this evening it looked paler and graver than ever.

"My dear," Grandmother said to Anne, "I don't think Johnnie's well. I don't like his looks at all : he don't look like the same child he used to do : it isn't much I've got to give him, now ; but what I have, he won't eat, and he haven't had a morsel of anything in his pretty lips this blessed day : if he was mine, now, I'd take him to Dr. Clarke to-morrow morning, and lose no time." And when Anne took Johnnie on her lap, she wondered how it was she had not observed before how ill he was : she had thought him pale and thin, it is true : but now she took fright when she felt his burning brow on her bosom, as he sat on her knee ; as she listened to his quickly-drawn breath, and watched his heaving chest ; and when she spoke to him he took no notice.

"His dear lips, and under his eyes, all looks

so blue, too," said grandmother ; and she insisted on staying with Anne, to watch Johnnie through the night. "I've had my supper, my dear," she added considerably, knowing Anne had nothing to spare, "and now, I'll put Johnnie to bed, whilst you get yours ;" and so Grannie contrived to be absent, that she might not distress Anne by seeing the poverty of her evening meal.

And Anne wept as she went through the form of taking a piece of dry bread from the cupboard, and presently put it away again without having tasted it ; she hastened up to Johnnie, and found Grandmother on her knees by his bedside ; and Johnnie, who was already in bed, with his hands clasped, and his lips moving, as he followed the familiar evening prayer which Grannie was repeating ; and when it was finished, Grannie still knelt on by his bedside for a few minutes, and prayed in silence.

Johnnie, who had been lying with his eyes shut, opened them once, and looked at his mother, and then fell into a feverish sleep, holding fast by her hand ; grandmother, whose experience as a nurse had taught her many a simple remedy, had administered a fever draught, and comforted Anne with the assurance that he would be better in the morning.

But Anne's fears once roused, magnified every bad symptom ; and in the hush of that still room,

and the dim light thrown over it by a single rushlight, she often fancied, as a flickering shade fell on Johnnie's face, that the hand of death was on him. Wearily she watched for the dawn of the April morning; and when the first beams of day broke in, Johnnie was sleeping peacefully; the flush was gone from his cheek, and the breathing was softer; it was a healthful sleep, and Anne dreaded the sounds which now and then began to be heard in the street; in her nervous, excited state, she almost feared that the short, sharp chirp of the sparrows might wake him. And Grannie sat watching the mother and child, and occasionally taking a doze in her arm-chair.

Johnnie indeed was refreshed by sleep, and Grannie's precautions had in some degree relieved his feverish symptoms; but the evil that had been stealing on gradually for weeks, was not to be driven away by a single fever-draught; and Anne decided to go and ask Dr. Clarke's advice. "Look," she said to grandmother, as she took out her purse, "some good creature sent me half-a-sovereign yesterday; perhaps Dr. Clarke would be satisfied with that;—they say he's a good man." But Dr. Clarke was out, and not expected home till evening.

About four in the afternoon alarming symptoms *came on*, and Johnnie was again in a burning

fever. Grandmother was evidently alarmed, and when evening drew on, she stationed herself by Johnnie's pillow, whilst Anne, with an anxious heart, bent her steps once more in search of Dr. Clarke.

CHAPTER IX.

"Like flowers we wither and like leaves we fall."

Crabbe.

"ANOTHER cup of tea, please," said Dr. Clarke to his young wife, gaping and flinging himself down on the sofa. "I hope you're not getting tired of your office, my dear; I told you before we were married, you know, I wanted a wife to make tea for me."

"But the wisest men sometimes commit little errors in judgment, dear," said the kind Mrs. Clarke, with a smile, as she handed the fourth large cup of tea to her husband; "and I'm afraid the fourth cup won't do much credit to your choice of a tea-maker."

"I can't have been less than fifty miles to-day," said Dr. Clarke with another gape, "I'm dead beat. What have you been doing all day? any letters or notes for me?"

Mrs. Clarke handed a few professional notes to her husband; "and I have had a note, myself,"

she said, which I could not answer till I had seen you; it's an invitation to dine at Framley Hall on the third of May, at seven o'clock; one of their enormous parties I suppose."

"I wish people would let one alone," said Dr. Clarke; "when I come home tired to death of an evening, I like to stay at home with my wife."

"I'm sure," said Mrs. Clarke, "I've no wish to be *victimized* at a long formal dinner-party on a beautiful May evening. Shall I decline?"

"Pray do," (with another gape;) "there," said Dr. Clarke tossing a small square-folded white paper into his wife's lap, "you may give that to the first person you see that wants a guinea; I really hardly liked taking it; it's old Smith's fee; but if he will send for me just to tell him there's nothing the matter with him, I can't help it; he can't expect me to go all the way to Rose Villas for nothing. Mr. Smith will give you some cuttings from his roses when the proper time comes, and he hopes you will go and see his garden."

"If you please, Sir, you're wanted," said the footman opening the door.

"My dear, you can't go out again to-night!" exclaimed Mrs. Clarke; "impossible!"—"Who is it, Thomas?" asked the Doctor. Thomas was Dr. Clarke's *factotum*; an old confidential servant; and Thomas was in the habit of occa-

sionally using his discretion, and giving his master little preparatory hints as to the sort of person, when a new patient called. But this time Thomas seemed considerably puzzled. "I can't exactly say, Sir, what sort of person it is."

"A lady or a gentleman?" asked Mrs. Clarke.

"It's a person with a veil, Ma'am, I noticed; and seems genteel; but she looks like anybody not well off, and seems in a good deal of trouble. She said you didn't know her, Sir, and it was of no use to send in her name."

Dr. Clarke rubbed his eyes to get them open, and telling his wife he should be back presently, he was soon closeted in his study with the "person" who had so much puzzled Thomas's powers of discernment. But instead of speaking to Dr. Clarke when he entered the room, she buried her face in her handkerchief and sobbed; till, as he kindly bade her be seated, she took comfort from the tone of his voice, and began in an agitated manner, "Do come, Sir, and see my child, he's dying;" and then, as the sobbing became hysterical, Dr. Clarke hastily left the room.

"My dear," he said to his wife, as he returned to the drawing-room, "I wish you would just take a glass of wine to a young woman I left in the study—she seems hysterical—try and soothe her, and find out who she is if you can. She seems quite in a state of exhaustion. Find out where .

she lives too, and tell her I'll come; she says her child is dying."

Mrs. Clarke hastened to the study with a glass of wine in her hand, and words of comfort on her lips; but returned after only a few minutes' absence. "She's gone, dear," she said, "she was in haste to get home; I think she feared the child might die whilst she was away; I told her you would come directly. And to my surprise," added Mrs. Clarke, "I found I knew her—I used to know her, at least. I remembered her face directly; her name was Anne Hardman, and when she and I were both children, she used to come and say her catechism to my dear mother, with my sisters and me, on a Sunday; her mother was our laundress; but for some time after she was grown up I lost sight of Anne; I suppose she married, for some years I never saw her, till I chanced some time ago to meet her one day in the street."

"And you are sure this is the same person?"

"Quite sure; she and I have often played together in the old nursery; only she's strangely altered; why, or wherefore, I can't conceive, but that day I met her in the street (though I'm sure she knew me,) she passed me without speaking. I should like to know the reason, for I'm sure I never offended her; I could not help feeling hurt to see her pass by in that manner; and

I fancied she had rather a proud look, as if she did not choose to speak."

"My good little wife," said Dr. Clarke, "it's of no use to be hurt about it—I can tell you the reason. The rising generation, in her rank of life, know a little more than their fathers and mothers do—that's all; and so they are very much set up by it. (I don't mean to say it's the case with all; but this kind of feeling is the tendency of the age we live in.) They want a little of that charity which can look up kindly to those above, as well as kindly down to those below; that charity which 'envieth not.' If they could but get a glimpse," continued Dr. Clarke, "of the little they know, by the side of all they know nothing about, they would see it is but like a drop compared with the ocean. But there are great allowances to be made—it's a trying position for them to be placed in—their heads are turned by all the superficial knowledge they pick up at public lectures, and so on; it's something new to them at present; in another generation things will shake down into their right places."

"And do you think, then, all *that* had anything to do with Anne Hardman, or whatever her name is, not speaking to me in the street?"

"Yes, I do; I have no doubt, at least I should think it very likely," said Dr. Clarke, "that her husband is one of the new lights of the nineteenth

century, and that she has imbibed a few of his notions; wives almost always grow like their husbands, you know," said he, looking at his wife.

"An awful responsibility for husbands, indeed, my dear," Mrs. Clarke answered; "but aren't you going to this little child? I'm afraid you must. I remember, now; Dallaway is the name she told me."

"And could you make out where she lives, or anything else?"

"She said she was living at Millham, but I could scarcely make out what she said, for her sobbing, poor thing! she seemed quite crushed with grief; and yet I could see she was not half-pleased at seeing me." And Dr. Clarke left his wife to go out.

Old Nurse Lock met the doctor with a shake of the head, as he entered the room where Johnnie lay. "He ain't long for this world, Sir," she whispered. Anne heard the whisper, and looked into Dr. Clarke's face as if her existence depended upon what he might say.

"My good woman," he said gravely, "you should have sent for me before."

"But he can't be so bad as Grandmother says, Sir; it was only yesterday he took to his bed."

"Your child must have been ill for weeks," said Dr. Clarke; and as he examined his symp-

toms, he said half in a whisper, "Poor child! dying of want; things are gone too far now, for me to do him much good, I fear." Then addressing Grandmother, he added, "You may give him something I'll order for him at the chemist's, Nurse, as I go home; it may revive him a little; but, indeed," he said, looking at Anne, "you must be prepared for the worst."

Those who have witnessed scenes like this, need no description of it; and those who know not yet what sorrow and death are, will know them soon enough. Anne and the good grandmother watched all night—and when the morning dawned, the angels carried Johnnie away. For that beautiful, little, lifeless form that was left lying on the bed—that habitation in which Johnnie had dwelt—he had gone out of it; and it must be laid by with reverence till the spirit which dwelt in it shall be joined to it again on the morning of the Resurrection.

"It was a sore thing," as Grandmother said, "to see poor Anne;" she would have been glad to pray, if she could; but she had not been used to pray for so long that she did not know how. At first, she tried to employ herself, and to be busy about different things; to do anything, in short, rather than think; but thoughts beset her in spite of her efforts to drive them away; and after Johnnie was laid in his grave, her restless-

ness gave way to a settled, silent grief; and she would sit for hours with her head leaning on her hand, and her eyes fixed, looking at nothing. There was a comfortless look, too, about her untidy room; and in the little strip of garden which the people where they lodged had given to Johnnie to sow his seeds in; the flowers now grew straggling for want of training, and the climbing plants which should have been supported, were left trailing on the ground.

It is hard to say whether Anne's mind might not have given way under this unrelieved anguish, if she had not been roused by the arrival, at last, of a letter from Charles;—though so long expected it took her by surprise when it came; and half Anne's load of sorrow seemed lifted off when she saw his handwriting.

“Melbourne, December. 15th, 1850.

“My dear Anne,

“As I hear there will be a chance of sending home before long, I now commence writing. I meant to have written before this time, because now there's so many miles betwixt us, I know nothing will please you more than hearing that I am well, though I can't say altogether happy, being so uncertain what to turn my hand to, to get a living; and that's why I put off writing till now, hoping to have some better news to tell you than I am sorry to say I have at present.

“We had an unusual quick passage, and reached *Melbourne* the 30th of October; since then I have been

looking out for an opening, and should have preferred sticking to my old business. For, could I have got a situation with a mercer, I should soon have got on, being fresh from England, and knowing what's what, better than, I take it, a great many do out here. For the last two months, and no doubt you'll be amused to hear it, being so different to what I've been used to, but for the last two months I've been a waiter at an inn, and shall continue so till I hear of something to suit me. I find my new employment rather a diverting one, as I see a vast number of curious people, and sometimes persons I remember seeing in England. But it makes me dull, too, now and then, seeing so many strange faces, and not one out of them all that cares for me. You can't think, Anne, how dull it made me the other day, when I heard some one humming the old tune of "Home, sweet home," for it brought back all as plain as possible before my eyes how you used to sit in the back parlour of an evening sometimes, and play it on your accordion to please Johnnie; I could not help shedding a few tears over it. I often wish I could see Johnnie's face, and yours too; tell him not to forget father. I can't say anything yet about your coming out, but hope to see my way better when I write next time. Give my love to Grandmother, and tell her how I wish we could all have our Christmas dinner together. It seems curious to have Christmas coming just in the middle of summer, which it is here now; but this is a curious country altogether, and it's quite true what I read in some book before I came out, that everything seems as if it went by the rule of contrary; the sun shines from the north in the middle of the day, that's to say, instead of the south, like it does in England; and when we're going to have fine weather, the weather-glass will fall, and when it's going to rain it

rises ; and as I said, it's warm weather at Christmas, and the depth of winter in June. It's quite true, too, what I likewise read, that the swans are black here instead of white ; and what sounds very strange, the owls hoot in the daytime, and you may hear the cuckoos shouting about the country at night. Tell Johnnie the cherries grow with the stones outside in this part of the world ; and I think he'll hardly believe it, nor you neither, but it's quite true, that all the native animals here wear pockets. As for cows and sheep, there never were any here at all, I'm told, till they were brought here a great many years ago, from other countries ; but it's wonderful how they thrive. I never saw any of the natives, human ones I mean, except once, when I went a good way into the bush (that's what they call the country where the trees have not been felled yet, nor the land tilled ;) they are not above three or four feet high, and their heads are as flat as the top of a beer-barrel ; and they seemed to look very dull and stupid ; I have heard say of them they never even found out how to strike a light and make a fire to cook their victuals. There are no convicts sent here *direct* from England now, but what is almost as bad, the very worst of the convicts that are sent to Van Dieman's Land, come over here on a ticket of leave, and that, very soon after their arrival from England.

"I hope you will write to me as soon as you get this ; and you had better direct to "The Post Office, Melbourne, Australia," as it's uncertain how long I shall stay where I am now ; for I feel very anxious to know how you have been getting on. I know very well what it is that makes me seem dull sometimes—it's the debts I left behind, which *●*n't be less, with the hundred and fifty pounds I owe Grandmother, and the half of the debts I

left owing to my other creditors as well, than two hundred and fifty pounds; it's true, I'm out of their reach here, but I don't feel the weight on my mind any less, now I'm on this side of the world, than it was when I was at home; and it's my determination, as soon as ever I can get enough to pay all off, I will do so without delay, and rid it off my mind. Till then I hardly know how to ask Grandmother's forgiveness; but still, I must conclude with sending my love to her, and our Johnnie, and I am your loving husband, though distant,

“CHARLES DALLAWAY.”

This letter roused Anne out of her stupor, and seemed, for a time, to put new life into her; for she had sorrowed in secret, not only on account of Johnnie's death, but from the conviction, which grew stronger and stronger as day after day went by and brought no letter, that Charles had forsaken her. And Anne read that part of the letter over and over till she knew it by heart, about Charles shedding tears as he thought of her playing, “Home, sweet home;” true, Anne's tears flowed afresh when she read those little messages to Johnnie, and reflected how little Charles thought he would be lying in the churchyard when the letter reached England; but still, both she and grandmother were cheered up by it, and she felt more disposed than she otherwise would, to take kindly a visit which was paid her about this time by Mrs. Clarke, the physician's wife.

"I hope," said Mrs. Clarke, as Anne handed her a chair, "I hope you will not think me an unwelcome visitor ; but Dr. Clarke and I both felt anxious about you, and I promised him to call and ask how you are." There was a slight movement on Anne's part, and a look in her face, which seemed as if she were not altogether well pleased to see Mrs. Clarke ; perhaps the sight of her awoke thoughts which Anne had long been trying to smother, and called up recollections of better days. "You have had much to try your health," said Mrs. Clarke, "and you look far from strong—do come and consult Dr. Clarke ; he told me to say you had better come to him if you want medical advice."

"Dr. Clarke's very good, I'm sure," Anne answered ; and as she spoke she kept her eyes fixed on the ground ; "I don't think anything ails me ; but I must try and keep well, because, may be, my husband will be sending for me to go out to him in Australia."

"Australia !" said Mrs. Clarke, "then he's already gone, himself?"

"He's been gone these nine months," Anne answered ; "business got so dull here."

"But, Anne, you're not fit to take a long voyage ; you're coughing now."

Anne started a little at being called by her *Christian* name. "When we were children I al-

ways called you Anne," said Mrs. Clarke, as if answering Anne's unspoken thoughts, "and for old acquaintance' sake you must let me call you so still, though much has happened since those days; I never even knew you were married, till lately. I can't remember ever hearing your banns published; I suppose I was away from home at the time. (Anne pressed her hands together nervously.) How long is it since you married?"

"I think it's rather better than five years," Anne answered; "but I've seen a deal of trouble since then."

"I'm sure you have; I know you have; but if there's anything I could do—if you would but make a friend of me—I would do anything I could to serve you; at all events," said Mrs. Clarke, as she rose to go, "come and see Dr. Clarke; indeed you ought to take something for that cough."

Anne promised to come, but she did not smile as she wished Mrs. Clarke "good-bye" and thanked her; for her face had now so long worn a settled, habitual look of sorrow, it seemed as if she had forgotten how. This was only the first of many visits which Anne received from Mrs. Clarke; and by degrees she began to look forward to them with pleasure, and to miss her if *she stayed away*. But though she liked to

hear the sound of Mrs. Clarke's kind voice, she could never quite lay aside her reserve; for it was a sound which recalled the days that were gone, and made her feel painfully the difference between herself as she was in those days, and herself as she was now; it recalled the time when she was as happy and as merry as the day was long; it called back the days of her childhood, and that good time when she never thought of laying her head on her pillow without saying her prayers; and she remembered how in former days she would no more have thought of going without her meals all day, than of staying away from Church all day on a Sunday. And at such times a feeling of regret would sometimes steal over her that she and Charles married in the way they did without asking God's blessing on it; and she wished it was all to do over again.

Some such self-reproaches as these were often and often called up by the sound of Mrs. Clarke's voice, and they brought a shade of sadness over her face which Mrs. Clarke could not fail to observe.

"Dr. Clarke says," said Mrs. Clarke to Anne one day, "that medicine will never do you good whilst you fret; he says he knows your mind is anxious about something, and we must try and *ease it*; he thinks that perhaps the uncertainty

of this little shop preys on your spirits, and if you could contrive to get a living some other way it would be better to give it up altogether."

"I can hardly call it getting a living," said Anne, "my custom is not much to give up, now. Grandmother, too, she often says she'd be glad if I'd close the shop and go and lodge with her; only my husband, he wished me to keep on if I could, but I don't see how I can do it much longer."

Anne, not long after this, consented to follow the advice of her friends, and promised to move to Grandmother's cottage, if Mrs. Clarke could succeed in a plan of getting her employment in the millinery department of Smith and Fincham's establishment. It was a beautiful evening in May, that, as Mr. Smith was sitting at the window—that window that looked out on the sunset sky—he saw Mrs. Clarke's carriage drive up and stop before his garden gate. "Jane! Jane! make haste and run to the gate, there's Mrs. Clarke's carriage," he exclaimed, as he put his best foot foremost, and hastened, with many bows, to assist Mrs. Clarke in alighting.

"Shall be most happy, Mrs. Clarke," said Mr. Smith, "if you'll do me the honour to walk down the garden. Excuse me one moment, my dear Ma'am, I'll follow you directly," and he bustled back to the house. "Jane! Jane! I think the

evening's rather cool, and I *must* go down the garden with Mrs. Clarke; make haste and fetch my wrapper, Dr. Clarke says I *must* take care."

"Your garden is delicious, Mr. Smith! and what a bed of anemones!" said Mrs. Clarke to the venerable-looking, white-headed old man, as he reappeared with a handkerchief tied carefully over his mouth. Mr. Smith looked benevolent, and begged Mrs. Clarke to gather what she liked; but he soon began to get very fidgetty; "You'd better not stay out of doors too late, my dear Ma'am," he began, "the evening's rather cool."

"But I see you wrap up, Mr. Smith, like a wise man."

"My dear Ma'am, I think it's but justice to Dr. Clarke; he always says, 'Mr. Smith, prevention is better than cure;' and I'm sure I may say with truth that, under Providence, it's entirely owing to Dr. Clarke I'm alive now—he understands my symptoms."

Perhaps Mrs. Clarke felt slightly alarmed when Mr. Smith touched upon the subject of symptoms, for she gently interrupted him. "Dr. Clarke was anxious I should come and see your anemones in their beauty; and indeed it is a sight worth seeing; but I must frankly own, Mr. Smith, that I had two objects in view in *wishing* to see you. My husband said he was

sure I might venture to ask the favour of you to use your influence with Mr. Fincham, to prevail on him to give some employment to a young milliner, (a patient of Dr. Clarke's,) who seems in the greatest distress—almost starving I'm afraid, sometimes. I don't know what to do to help her, for she is a person who would feel hurt if I offered her money. Her name is Dallaway—perhaps you may remember the name."

Mr. Smith grew interested in the case as he heard the name of Dallaway, and began to recollect that he had heard some particulars about Mr. Dallaway going out to Australia under no very creditable circumstances.

"She always looks more like a widow than a wife," said Mrs. Clarke, "but I hope she would cheer up a little if we could once get her some regular employment."

"I'm so glad, my dear Ma'am, so glad you mentioned the case; depend upon it she shall be thought of."

"But I ought not to keep you standing in an east-wind, Mr. Smith;" and with thanks for his kind attention to her request, Mrs. Clarke hastened to her carriage, and Mr. Smith retired within doors with a little imaginary cough.

It was the peculiar pleasure of Mr. Smith's life, to help those who were in distress; he seemed to have a talent for finding out people

who needed assistance; and many were the silent, unknown, unheard-of acts of kindness which night by night were registered in Heaven, as this good old man laid his head on his pillow. We all have our weaknesses; and if Mr. Smith had this one little weakness of thinking rather more than was necessary about his health, (because he had no wife and children to care for,) this peculiarity, at all events, had never made him selfish; and from that time, not only was Anne regularly supplied with work, but comforts of many kinds were constantly administered both by Mr. Smith and Mrs. Clarke; comforts she had, but not comfort; and still as time after time Mrs. Clarke saw her, there was that shade of sadness on her face, that told of a want of peace within; and one day as she was sitting with Anne, and Anne looked more out of heart than usual, she said to her at last, "Anne, I know you fret; I'm afraid you fret about your little Johnnie; you would not wish to bring him back?"

"That I wouldn't," said Anne; "no, I don't fret for him; I'm almost glad at times to think he's gone where there's no more trouble."

"But you do fret about something, Anne; and yet, you say, you had a kind letter from your husband. You must wait, you know, till he can *send for you.*"

"Oh yes," said Anne; "I don't fret about that. Nobody could write kinder; and I must write and answer his letter soon, for I wasn't like myself when Johnnie died, and Grandmother wrote and told him all." And still Anne said, day after day, "she must write to Charles;" and still she put it off; perhaps there were things she wished to write to him she almost feared to mention; things perhaps that she feared would make him angry, and so she still delayed; and every day she grew more silent, and the east wind chilled her that spring, and disease was laying fast hold of her. •

That Eve of St. Thomas's when Anne went out through the fog to the pawnbroker's shop, she caught cold; but having other, and greater cares on her mind, she neglected it, and, by degrees, a cough which would not yield even to Dr. Clarke's skill, had fastened upon her; it shook her fragile frame, and drained away her strength; and it was well she was now under one roof with so kind and watchful a nurse as Grandmother.

But in vain Grannie's simples were tried, one after the other; "She'll fade away afore the summer's gone," she said one day, as she followed Mrs. Clarke outside the door; "she'll never see her husband no more in this world."

"I did *not* know how to tell you of it, Nurse,"

Mrs. Clarke answered, "but that has long been Dr. Clarke's opinion; and he means to tell her so next time he sees her—he thinks it right."

"Ah," said the old lady, "I only wish she'd be persuaded and see the clergyman—that's what frets me."

But Anne steadily refused, whenever Grandmother asked her if it wouldn't be a comfort to her to see the clergyman. "No, she wouldn't do anything when Charles was away, that he wouldn't have wished her to do if he was at home; and she didn't think it was what Charles would approve;" and she had always some excuse to make when Mrs. Clarke urged the same thing. She thought she should be better when the warm weather came; she would wait a bit, and see.

But the warm weather when it came, took all Anne's strength away; the fatigue of walking even round Grandmother's little garden, became too much for her; she seemed to pant for breath as she sat propped up with pillows by Grandmother's experienced hand; and those who looked at her could not but feel, that "her time was passing away like a shadow."

CHAPTER X.

"As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country."—*Proverbs*, xxv. 25.

"He, that has light within his own clear breast,
May sit i'the centre, and enjoy bright day:
But he, that hides a dark soul and foul thoughts,
Benighted walks under the mid-day sun;
Himself is his own dungeon."

Milton.

COMPLACENT was the smile with which Mrs. Hardman alternately looked in the glass as she put on a fresh-trimmed cap, and then out of the window, as she watched Mrs. Clarke one morning coming down the street, and drawing nearer and nearer. "I thought so," she exclaimed to herself, as Mrs. Clarke stopped at the door; and she could not help just putting her head out of the upstairs window, before she ran down to admit Mrs. Clarke, to ascertain whether any of the neighbours were looking to see who it was standing at the door.

"Pray sit down, Mrs. Clarke, I am sure I take it very kind your coming down. I hope the Doctor's well." And Mrs. Hardman tried to seem very much at her ease, but yet there was something in the expression of Mrs. Clarke's gentle, thoughtful face, which made her feel fidgetty.

"Thank you, Mrs. Hardman, Dr. Clarke is quite well, he would have called on you himself, but being very busy to-day, he begged me to come instead."

Mrs. Hardman felt more puzzled now, than she was before; she prided herself on having visits from ladies, amongst whom she was "very much respected;" but that Dr. Clarke himself should have thought of calling was such a very great honour, she hardly knew what to make of it; so she answered, "any time when the Doctor's at leisure, Mrs. Clarke, I and my daughters will be proud if he'll look in; as for Hardman, he's out all day."

"I am afraid Mrs. Hardman," Mrs. Clarke began, "you don't suspect on what a sad errand I am come."

Mrs. Hardman became more uneasy, and looked inquiringly at Mrs. Clarke without speaking; so the physician's wife continued, "Dr. Clarke has been for some time attending your daughter *Anne*, Mrs. Hardman. You will excuse my men-

tioning the subject I hope, but I hear from her husband's grandmother, old Nurse Lock, that you have never been on good terms with her since she married."

A cloud began to gather on Mrs. Hardman's face. "Perhaps you've not been told, Mrs. Clarke," she said, drawing herself up till she looked the very perfection of propriety, "what my reasons are for not noticing Anne."

"Yes; Nurse Lock has told me that she married without your consent." And after a pause Mrs. Clarke added, "I think you would be shocked to see how ill Anne looks; and so dejected. Dr. Clarke thinks, that perhaps she frets at the thought of leaving this world without her mother's forgiveness; and as he thinks it most important that her mind should be at ease, he begged me to tell you of your daughter's danger, and to entreat you to lean to the side of mercy, and to go yourself (I am taking a liberty I know, but still I do join my own entreaties with my husband's, that you will go yourself) and tell her you forgive her, before it is too late."

As Mrs. Clarke uttered those words, "tell her you forgive her," Mrs. Hardman threw herself back in her chair, and looked at Mrs. Clarke with the most unfeigned astonishment. "Forgive her!" she repeated; "I hope you'll forgive *me*," she added, with her lips compressed, and

the fire darting from her eyes; "but that's not what I expected to hear from a lady such as you, Mrs. Clarke. Why, if you had gone and got married at the Register Office, (not that Dr. Clarke's the gentleman to do such a thing,) should you have expected your Mamma ever to speak to you, or to wish to see you in her house again, and you always brought up to the Church? no, never!" said Mrs. Hardman thumping the table with her little fat fist, and getting hysterical.

The gentle Mrs. Clarke looked frightened at Mrs. Hardman's violence. "I never heard this before, Mrs. Hardman. I never knew till this minute that Anne was married as you say; all I heard was, that she married without your consent." And after thinking for a minute, Mrs. Clarke added, "Anne was indeed greatly to blame, as a Churchwoman, if she married in that manner."

Mrs. Hardman's spirits became more composed when she saw how much shocked Mrs. Clarke looked at hearing Anne was married at the Register Office. "You've been kept purposely in the dark, Mrs. Clarke," she said, "there's not a doubt of it. And though it's to my shame, I'm glad I've been the means of undeceiving you. Strange, I thought it, to be sure, you should have *been noticing* a girl like that."

"She's ill, Mrs. Hardman, and has been in a great deal of trouble besides ; and now, Dr. Clarke says, any day may be her last. I cannot stay away from her now, distressed as I feel at what you have just told me. Do come, too, Mrs. Hardman ; let me tell her you will come and grant her your forgiveness."

"My forgiveness ! no, never. If I had acted so myself, I should never have expected to be forgiven—and therefore I can't be expected to forgive her." Mrs. Hardman trembled with suppressed anger ; and her distended nostrils and her firmly-clenched hand, showed how great an effort it cost her to prevent the fire from bursting into a flame.

"I shall say nothing to Anne then on the subject," said Mrs. Clarke ; "I did not tell her I was coming on this errand ;" and she rose to go : but she turned round as she reached the door, and looking at Mrs. Hardman with a steady eye, she said in a clear, distinct voice and deliberate manner, which made even Mrs. Hardman quail a little, "God showeth mercy to the just and to the unjust ; and maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good." As Mrs. Clarke went on her way, tears came to her eyes ; and with a dejected mind she bent her steps to Nurse Lock's cottage ; she was not only dismayed at Mrs. Hardman's refusing to see and to forgive her own

child, uncertain as it was too how many days she had to live ; but she was grieved at her heart for what she had heard about Anne's marriage. She had never thought much about the subject before, for she was not in the habit of "exercising herself in great matters that were too high for her." There were wiser heads than hers to decide whether there might, or might not be, circumstances in which marriage by civil contract would be allowable, and even better than none at all ; (as, for instance, in some of the colonies, where church and clergy are often out of reach ;) but it struck her at once as blameworthy and inconsistent for a *Churchwoman* to go and be married at a Register Office, when there was a church close at hand, and a clergyman ready to marry her.

To her great surprise, Mrs. Clarke found Anne looking better than she had looked for weeks ; and she smiled with a genuine happy smile as Mrs. Clarke inquired how she felt.

"I'm a great deal better to-day," said Anne ; "I think Dr. Clarke is under a mistake about my case, now."

Mrs. Clarke smiled as she assured Anne Dr. Clarke would be very glad to find he was mistaken ; "but," she asked, "what makes you feel so much better to-day ?"

"*She have had some medicine that have done*

her good this morning, Ma'am, that's what it is," said old Nurse Lock.

"One of Dr. Clarke's prescriptions, you mean?" inquired Mrs. Clarke, looking as if she half suspected Anne had taken a fancy to send for a quack doctor.

"No, not Dr. Clarke's I don't mean," answered the old lady.

Mrs. Clarke looked, and naturally felt a little indignant, at what she thought an unjustifiable piece of rudeness to her husband, after all his kindness to Anne.

But Anne smiled as she said, "My medicine came from a distant land;" and drawing a letter from her pocket at the same time, she offered it to Mrs. Clarke; "perhaps you'd like to read it," she said, "it's a very interesting letter; I'm sure I didn't look to hear again so soon; for he have'nt had the letter yet Grandmother wrote to tell him—about our poor Johnnie."

"No secrets?" asked Mrs. Clarke as she opened the letter.

"No," said Anne, "but there's plenty of good news, of more kinds than one: perhaps you'd read it out; I should like to hear it through again," she added, as she leaned back in her invalid chair with a happy smile on her face. Anne looked that day, Mrs. Clarke thought, almost as she used to do before she was married;

and making Grannie sit down on the other side of her, she read the letter aloud.

“Melbourne, May 25th, 1851.

“My dear Anne,

“I shall not wait to have an answer to my last letter, before I write again, because I know I could not have it before the middle of next July; and I’ve got a great deal to tell you about, that I think you’ll be glad to hear. There are most astonishing discoveries made here lately, which have taken everybody quite by surprise; but the greatest wonder of all is, that they never have been made before. For do you know, there’s as much gold, and more too, they say, to be found out here, than there is at the diggings at California, that you must have heard talk of; so I think I’m come out at the right time. By the time you get this, I hope and trust I shall be on my way home; for if I have good luck, I reckon I may go to the diggings, and be back in time to sail some time about the end of July. Of course how long I stay there, will depend a good deal on how I get on; but there have been some wonderful instances of people getting rich, as you may say, in the course of a few months. Only think of one man’s luck, that dug up an enormous piece of ore that weighed a hundred and four pounds; and that’s worth four or five thousand pounds in money. And a party of men, that I know myself, dug as much gold in a week, as was worth £150 to each of them. I’m not saying that such cases as these are common; and there are, certainly, a great many that meet with great disappointments and misfortunes; and some that have had the greatest luck, have been woke in the night, as they lay

in their tents, by a couple of fellows with pistols, standing over them, demanding their gold. I don't look forward with any great pleasure to going, but it is the weight of what I have on my mind (Anne here interrupted to explain that he had borrowed money of Grandmother; and owed a good deal to other people as well; and Grandmother wiped her eyes with her apron, and said 'she always knew Charles meant to do what was upright by her—God bless him;' and then Mrs. Clarke began again.) I don't look forward with any great pleasure to going, but it is the weight of what I have on my mind, that keeps me up to it; for I don't hear very pleasant accounts of the state the people are living in at the diggings, so many hundreds as there are, all crowded together. The wet weather has now commenced, and I mean to be off in a few days; in the warm weather, water will be very short up there, they say. There's no expensive preparations required, as all that you want is a pick-axe, and a sifting-tin.

"There's nothing talked about at Melbourne, but gold and the diggings; some seem to grow quite mad after gold, that have got a good deal; and many of them never seem better off neither; for what comes easy, goes easy. There's nothing to be seen in the streets but drays, both horse and bullock, starting for the diggings. Trade has been at a stand-still, for no one would speculate; and provisions and fuel are rising, fifty, and even a hundred per cent. The only cheap thing is furniture, which may be bought very reasonable, second-hand, as hundreds have sold off everything under the excitement; the rate of wages is much higher here, in consequence of so many leaving. What do you think of three quarters of a ton of gold being obliged to be left behind, because the escort was *not* able to bring it all on to Melbourne;

and gold is being sold here every day in the week, by public auction.

"Now then, Anne, I'll tell you what I mean to do, for I hope I've got some conscience left, which is this: It often preys on my mind a good deal, when I think how I left you and Johnnie, and about Grandmother; and I should not feel my mind easy to stay any longer at the diggings, than what's necessary to get enough to pay my debts, and bring me home, and may be something more: because, if I find you willing, why shouldn't I come out here again, and you and Johnnie with me? and as to Grandmother, we must hear what she says (here Grannie shook her head;) so I must bring some thing towards paying our passage. If I can, I mean to stay at the diggings, till I've got as much gold as I can turn into three hundred and fifty pounds worth of money, and then I don't mean to stay another day; but I shall sail directly, and be home, I hope, before the end of the English autumn. (Here Mrs. Clarke paused, and looked with a sad heart at Anne, to think how little chance there was that she could live to see her husband again. But Anne's face was bright with hope, and she looked prettier than ever she did before; with her transparent complexion, and the bright colour in her cheek, and her full, brilliant eye, 'Go on to the end,' she said; 'I like to hear it. There's only one thing grieves me, and that is to think he'll sail, most likely, without getting the letter about poor Johnnie; for it can't get there before the middle of August, they say, and Charles talks of sailing about the end of July; but please to finish the letter.' And Mrs. Clarke proceeded to the end.) I have been keeping on where I was when I wrote last, and have had no easy life of it lately, I can tell you, so many people are beginning to flock in from the other colonies.

"But now I must say good-bye for the present; and when we meet, I hope I shall find all well at home, as this leaves me. Tell Johnnie I'll bring him a golden penny when I come home; and with my best love to him and Grandmother,

"I remain, your loving husband,

"CHARLES DALLAWAY."

When Mrs. Clarke had finished the letter, her eye still rested on that message to Johnnie about the golden penny. Gone, as he was, to the fullness of joy, and where there is pleasure for evermore; gone to the land where he would inherit all things, and where he was satisfied with plenteousness. How paltry the golden penny seemed, by the side of realities like these! the thought of them showed the gold in its true light, and made the exact amount of its value felt! A thing it is men cannot do well without in this world; but still, a wise man would scarcely live for what is useful only on this side of the grave.

"Ah, poor fellow!" said Grandmother, who was tormenting herself with fancying "two fellows with pistols in their hands," standing over Charles, demanding his gold; "I hope he'll take no harm; he never have been used to dig neither, and I don't think he's much fit for it; why his hands *arn't no bigger* than a woman's!"

"And Anne," said Mrs. Clarke, as she rose to go, "you must keep yourself quiet, or all this will do you harm;" but still she looked so much better, that Mrs. Clarke herself could not help thinking there was still room for hope; and as she sat by her husband that evening, as he drank his fourth cup of tea, she told him all the particulars, and how Anne had really rallied of a sudden, and seemed to think she should recover.

"What you say," Dr. Clarke answered, "does not alter my opinion in the smallest degree; on the contrary, Anne's feelings are rather bad symptoms than not; it's a feature of her complaint that people often feel better, and even appear better and stronger, when the end is nearest."

"Like the leaves on the autumnal trees," said Mrs. Clarke, "which wear their brightest colours, just before they fall."

Anne's strength that day astonished not only Mrs. Clarke, but every one who saw her; she even walked round Grandmother's little garden, which she had not done for weeks; and before bed-time she insisted on beginning a letter to Charles; "because," she said, "if anything happened to keep him longer out there than he expected, he might still chance to get the letter, and she should be ashamed to think she had never written to him once."

In vain Grandmother begged her to delay till to-morrow, and entreated her not to try her strength too much; Anne wrote on, and her cheek grew more and more flushed from the effort she was making, and the excitement it occasioned; till at last, as Grandmother looked up anxiously from her knitting, she observed Anne's pen suddenly drop from her hand; a fainting-fit was the result of this over exertion, and Anne was carried up to bed in an insensible state by the neighbours who ran in to Grannie's assistance; that was on the twenty-eighth of July, about eight o'clock in the evening.

Grandmother had plenty of help from kind neighbours; and the news soon spread the next morning that Anne was worse.

"If you're going down to inquire for Mrs. Dallaway," said Mrs. Bolton to Mrs. Price, as she met her coming down the street towards Nurse Lock's cottage, "I can save you that trouble. I came past there not a quarter of an hour ago, and the curtains were drawn, and she was just gone, not five minutes before, the neighbours said."

"Well, to be sure! ah, poor old Nurse Lock, she have had a deal of trouble lately!" said Mrs. Price.

"And brought on her by them that ought to have helped her in her old age, Mrs. Price. I

never thought much of 'em, from the first they opened shop. And, to be sure, what a wicked world this is as we live in! Have you heard about Mr. Hardman? that's Mrs. Dallaway's father, you know, only they never noticed her."

"What him at Smith and Fincham's?"

"Smith and Fincham's head man," answered Mrs. Bolton; "and so respected he's always been; he's been there years and years."

Mrs. Price fixed her eyes expectingly upon Mrs. Bolton; and to judge by her looks, she felt something as one may suppose a greedy man feels when he eyes a savoury morsel on his fork before he puts into his mouth. "Well, Mrs. Bolton?" she said impatiently.

"This very morning, if you'll believe me, Mrs. Price, Mr. Fincham have had him arrested in the shop; for I know those that came past at the time, and they say there never was such an awful face seen in this world as Mr. Hardman's, when they took him off to prison. But I musn't stay talking and hindering your time; and I've got enough to do myself; here have I been up and at work since four o'clock this morning, and not half done yet!"

"But what is it he's been doing?" inquired Mrs. Price; for the relish she found in Mrs. Bolton's bad news had sharpened her appetite for *more*.

"Doing? why cheating Smith and Fincham through thick and thin; and they say he's been goin' on at it for a long time past; only so respectable as he always seemed, of course nobody thought o' suspecting him."

"Well, nobody can't call *me* a hypocrite," said Mrs. Price; "may be I'm not so good as I should be—but I can't abear hypocrites!"

"Smith and Fincham," continued Mrs. Bolton, "that's to say Mr. Fincham—for he's a rare man to attend to business, they say—well, he suspected there'd abeen somethin' goin' on wrong, so he makes a to-do with some of the men. Well, there's two o' the young men in the shop, they say, that never could abear Hardman—and whether they'd reasons I don't know, but they agreed to watch him."

"And so they caught him out at last, did they?"

"They caught him out, as you say, Mrs. Price, for they soon found, when they began to watch, that when customers paid ready money, the money didn't all go where it should; of course I can't say as to the truth of that, but I tell you as it was told me."

"Well, I never! and sure enough, then, he'll be tried next assizes—a nice crowd there'll be to see him!"

"He'll be tried at the sessions, as I've heard;

but he'll have cheap lodgings, anyhow, for the next two months. I wish you good morning, Mrs. Price."

Whilst this conversation was passing between Mrs. Price and Mrs. Bolton, news reached Mrs. Hardman that her husband was arrested; and, with all her faults, no one could help feeling for her under such a blow. Not that Mrs. Hardman believed for a minute that her husband was guilty;—it was the last thing she would have believed—so upright a man as he had always been thought by everybody;—rather harsh and sour in his temper, she knew he was—but dishonest! she would as easily believe the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself was dishonest. The disgrace was what weighed most on Mrs. Hardman's mind; the disgrace of her husband being carried off to prison like a felon. It was no wonder that Mrs. Hardman, who was always more or less subject to hysterics, should feel hysterical under circumstances like these; real, genuine tears, too, she shed—tears of anger and tears of grief—tears of agony—for she was hit in the tenderest part again; respectability was the end and aim for which she lived, and here was an arrow sticking in this most sensitive part. For now, every idle scamp in the town had it in his power to say that *her* husband was sent to prison *under a charge of felony*. That fact, at all events,

was undeniable, though Mrs. Hardman tried to console herself with thinking of the triumph she should enjoy when Hardman was acquitted; and she dealt out hard names, right and left, on "those wicked, malicious young men, in the shop, who could bring such a charge against an innocent man."

Mrs. Hardman "thought she should have died," as she said, when a message was brought from her husband that he wished to see her as soon as possible. "To think of my setting my foot in a gaol!" she exclaimed. "Hardman must wait; he can't expect me to walk up to the gaol gates in broad daylight, and everybody staring; Hardman must wait till dark." And Hardman did wait till dark.

But this waiting till dark within the four walls of a prison was not a kind of pastime calculated to improve Mr. Hardman's temper; and if he had not been indulged with a pipe, the time would have hung more heavily still on his hands. It was well for Mrs. Hardman that her husband had not been denied his habitual pipe; for, besides the soothing influence of the smoke, the pipe acted as a kind of stopper to his mouth, and to save the trouble of taking it out, his words, under these circumstances, were generally few; and as he sat there with his pipe in his mouth, and a jug of beer by his side, his wife felt almost

surprised when she was shown in by the turnkey, to see him looking much as he usually did at home.

"I sent for you eight or nine hours ago—hope you've not hurried yourself!" this was Mr. Hardman's conjugal greeting to his wife under these painful circumstances.

"You never expected me to come here in broad daylight, Hardman?" said Mrs. Hardman, with her handkerchief to her eyes, "for every body to see!"

"If I could come by daylight; I suppose you could," answered Hardman in his most morose tone; "there were plenty of people to see *me*;" and then, laying his pipe down, he continued, "but I didn't send for you to talk about how I came in—it's how I'm to get out, I want to talk about. And now you must do as I tell you. Go to your nephew, Richard Morgan, and say I sent you; and that I suppose he'll have no objection to bail me out; four hundred pounds, I'm informed, is the sum named; and tell him I have sent to two or three other persons (Hardman mentioned their names to his wife, at which she sobbed hysterically,) to ask them to share the responsibility, but as they are not able to do it, I feel sure he'll have no objection to take the whole of it, being nothing but a mere form. And say *this*, that I look forward to the day of my trial

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as the day that's to tell the public I'm an innocent man—of that I'll take my oath. None of your blubbering, if you please," he continued, as Mrs. Hardman continued to wipe her eyes; "and now you'd better go directly, before he goes to bed, and see if it can't be managed to-night; for one night's lodging in this place is one too many."

Nothing but the necessity of the case could have drawn so long a speech from Mr. Hardman, or have kept his pipe so long out of his mouth; and when he replaced it between his lips, Mrs. Hardman knew this was a sign that her company was no longer required; (what a happy state of things it is when husbands and wives understand one another in this way!) accordingly, she wished him good-night, and hastened in search of Richard Morgan.

When Mrs. Hardman arrived at Richard's lodgings, it was nearly ten o'clock. Richard was sitting with his back to her as she entered, reading; and as he shut the book, the words, "Holy Bible," caught Mrs. Hardman's eye, in large letters on the back.

Seeing his aunt's harrassed looks, Richard placed her in an arm-chair, and insisted on her taking a glass of wine, and soothed her by telling her she need not make herself uneasy, for he felt no doubt, in his own mind, as to her husband's innocence. "There's foul play somewhere," he

said, "but it would be hard to doubt a man's integrity that had borne a good character for so many years; and he believed the men who accused Mr. Hardman had, for some reason, a secret grudge against him."

"God bless you for saying so!" exclaimed Mrs. Hardman, "though it's only what I feel myself; and it makes me hope you won't refuse what Hardman sent me to ask; he says he'll take his oath of his innocence, and the public will be convinced of it too when he's put on his trial; but as that won't come on these two months, would you object, he says, to bail him out? four hundred pounds is the sum named. He's been unable to find another person, though he sent to two or three that used to call themselves friends (here Mrs. Hardman heaved a deep sigh,) to ask if they would share the responsibility, and then he would only have asked you to answer for half the sum; but they haven't shown themselves friends in the day of adversity, for all have refused that he's asked, so he casts himself on your mercy, and says, will you refuse to bail him out on your own responsibility? for, as he says, it's nothing but a form, and he's sure you won't refuse."

Richard started at this unexpected request. And who would not start at being suddenly asked *to risk* four hundred pounds? particularly when

it happens to be all one has. Hardman and his wife knew perfectly well that Richard had the power, if he had but the will to serve them ; for considering his careful way of living, and the length of time he had now served at Smith and Fincham's, at a high salary too of late years, he must have saved a hundred or two of his own ; but besides this, there was a certain three hundred pounds, concerning which Mrs. Hardman had always felt rather a grudge against Richard, which came to him from his Grandfather ; this three hundred pounds, the whole of his Grandfather's savings, had been left rather unjustly to Richard's mother, to the exclusion of her sister, Mrs. Hardman, she having in some way given offence to her father at the time he made his will. Richard's mother died a widow, when he was quite young ; so that this money of course came to her only child. Mrs. Hardman considered, that as far as this three hundred pounds was concerned, she was only asking for her own ; having always stoutly maintained, in defiance of all law, that she ought to have had it instead of Richard, when his mother died ; and " it was very hard," as she always said, " to have been kept out of her own father's money in the way she had."

" Surely, Richard," Mrs. Hardman began again, " you're not the person to refuse such a thing, *and we in all this trouble?*"

"I should like to take a little time to consider what I can do," said Richard; "I really can't answer such a question in a hurry—I'll let you know to-morrow morning."

"Then little's the sleep I shall have to-night. I didn't think you'd have had the heart to let me go away without a promise! and my poor husband! think of him, and what sort of a bed he'll have to-night!"

"I'll not keep you waiting longer than to-morrow morning," said Richard, "you can't expect me to answer such a question in one minute."

Mrs. Hardman, who thought it would be little better than a defeat to quit the ground without a victory, still made one or two more vain efforts to work upon Richard's feelings, and took her leave at last, muttering something as she went out about "hearts of stone."

Richard then took an evening walk up and down his room, for the space of half an hour, thinking, and sometimes almost talking to himself. The first thought that arose was, "I dislike Hardman so exceedingly—a man I never could bear." And the answer to it from Richard's better self came next—"But likes and dislikes ought not to influence you, if it's the right thing to do." It cost Richard a great effort, but he shoved the unkind thought on one

side, as having nothing to do with the question. —“But,” thought Richard, “what harm will it do him to lie in gaol a couple of months?”—and Richard’s better self answered, “Should you like it yourself?”—“Decidedly not,” thought Richard, “so on that ground I ought not to refuse. But would my four hundred pounds be safe? Will Hardman ever come back when he’s once out? and is he really innocent? I certainly feel a conviction that he’s an honest man, although an extremely disagreeable one; still, I can’t be sure, and there is a chance of my losing every farthing I have.”—“Of course there is,” said the better self; “but ought the remote possibility of harm resulting to yourself, to prevent your relieving the present distress of a fellow-creature? You won’t be unjust if you refuse; but you will be merciful if you comply.”—“Then I will comply,” said Richard.

Many might blame this decision as rash; but Richard’s heart was too kind to refuse, and having at last finished this debate between him and himself, he put out his candle, and laid his head on his pillow in peace.

The next morning Richard saw Mrs. Hardman, according to his promise, and took the necessary steps for getting Hardman set free; and Mr. Hardman having his foot once more at liberty, *lost no time* in disappearing from South-

bridge, leaving a message for Richard with his wife, that he might depend on his making his appearance at the appointed time, as he longed for the day which was to prove his innocence; but as it would be disagreeable to his feelings to remain at Southbridge during the interval, he was gone to spend the time with a friend in the country. During her husband's absence, Mrs. Hardman resolutely shut herself up within doors, and determined not to show her face even at church, till her husband's reputation was re-established; so that the manner in which she was affected by the news of Anne's death, and what sort of mourning she wore for her, or whether she wore any at all, remained matters of conjecture to Mrs. Price and Mrs. Bolton, and others of like nature.

The still, hot month of August went by; and summer changed to autumn; and Michaelmas drew on, and the time of the Sessions approached, and sometimes thoughts of the four hundred pounds haunted Richard uncomfortably, as he stood behind the counter at his daily avocation; and misgivings he had not felt at first, began to steal over him as the time came on when Hardman was pledged to re-appear. And the day of the Sessions came at last, and the cause of "Smith and Fincham *versus* Hardman," was duly announced in the list of impend-

ing trials; and Richard's heart sunk within him when no Hardman came to surrender himself to justice. It was indeed but too true, that Hardman had been base enough to bring ruin upon the friend who helped him; or, (to use his own words) he was "not such a fool" as to put his foot within a prison again, when he had once got clear of it. Mrs. Hardman and her daughters, too, all disappeared about this time, having only stayed till then, as was supposed, to keep up appearances; most people thought Hardman had got off to America, (thereby silently acknowledging himself guilty,) and had sent for them to join him there.

As Richard's salary remained the same as it was before, he could not be said to experience any immediate inconvenience from the loss of his four hundred pounds; still, he could not help feeling rather *glum* when he thought about it; for besides the fact that his money was gone, he had to endure the consciousness, which is a disagreeable one to most people, of having been over-reached; there was a large proportion too of sorrow for Hardman's guilt, mixed with the vexation he felt on his own account.

Still, Richard had looked all chances in the face when he consented to give bail; and now that he knew the worst, he set to work to economize, and to think how he could spare something more out of his salary than he had hitherto done,

for himself or others in a time of need, (for Richard was by no means cured of that propensity of his, to help his fellow-creatures in distress;) Richard therefore bethought himself of what was to be done next; for though he never doubted God would help him, he thought he was bound to do all he could to help himself; he would change his lodgings, he thought, and look out for some cheaper ones—perhaps in the country, they might not be so dear as they were in the town—and he should like a walk into Southbridge every day—it would do him good, shut up as he was from one end of the week to the other, with scarcely a breath of fresh air; he would walk out to Millham and consult Nurse Lock; she might know of some lodgings to suit him. Richard's visits to the old lady had ceased during the short time of Anne's residence with her; but since Anne had been laid in her grave, he often looked in upon Grannie, as she sat by her lonely fireside; he had heard from her all the particulars of Anne's death, and how Charles had written to say he was coming home some time in the autumn; and Grannie told him how she had "thought it right to send a letter to Charles, to tell him about Anne, as it must be uncertain how long it might be before he sailed, and it would be "dreadful for him," she said, to *come home unprepared.*

Richard found Grannie with the tears in her eyes, but she wiped them away, and cheered up at the sight of him ; "Grannie," he said, (for he had learnt from Charles, in the days that were gone, to call her by that name,) "I'm thinking of changing my lodgings—do you know of any ? cheap ones I mean, anywhere about here ? I'm a ruined man, Grannie. I am indeed," he added, answering Grannie's incredulous look ; and Richard told her all that had happened.

"Misfortunes come on all alike, then !" she said. "And the Lord knows my own troubles are very great. Now Anne's gone, of course I miss what Mr. Smith and Mrs. Clarke allowed for her lodging, and then my money that poor Charles had, that's gone ! and I'm brought down now to ask help of the parish, and thankful I am for what I get ; though I can't call it livin' neither, for it's more like starvin'."

A bright thought struck Richard ; "Grannie," he said, "is there any reason why I shouldn't come and lodge with you ?"

"Ah," she said with a sad smile, "my lodgings aren't what you've been used to, Mr. Morgan."

But Richard declared they were just what he liked, and the old lady began to get quite in good spirits, when it was settled that, at all events, he was to take up his abode with her till Charles's return ; "for," said Richard, "he and I were not

the best friends in the world before he went out; so as soon as you get a letter to say he's landed in England, I shall turn out; but in the meantime, if you'll take me in, I shall have time to look about me; perhaps, after all, he mayn't come before Christmas."

A very short time saw Richard established in his new quarters, and Grannie quite herself again now that she had "to do for Mr. Morgan;" she had some one to care for again now; but with Charles away, and Anne and Johnnie gone too, the good old lady's spirits had at one time begun to droop.

Pleasant were Richard's walks to and fro from Millham to Southbridge. The principal street in Southbridge made a right-angle with Millham; and from point to point of the angle there was a beautiful walk, leading through the churchyard and across the fields, which Richard generally preferred to the Millham road and the street; and often he went a little out of his way round by the old Lime tree. Many a bright autumn morning Richard sat for a time on the old favourite seat which encircled it, listening (almost without knowing it) to the song of a Robin, who himself had a favourite seat on a particular twig of this Lime tree. Most excellent sermons that Robin preached to Richard at such times, as the *gushing* notes went deeper and deeper into his

heart; for though winter was near, this good Robin never appeared to have any fears about the future; and let the weather be what it would, he always kept a merry heart. Richard listened, almost unconsciously indeed; still he grew wiser as he listened; and often he said to himself, "I can't tell how it is, but for the life of me I can't feel so much cut up about losing the money as anybody would suppose I should."

Peace and quiet within were Richard's happy lot; the changeful world and all its ups and downs seemed to have no hold upon him, as his eye rested upon the sights of beauty which lay around him as he daily crossed those fields, and listened to the blended, soothing sounds which fell upon his ear; every-day sights and sounds they were, may be, but, if it were only a dew-drop on a blade of grass, or the wind whispering in the fir trees, or the rustling of the dry beech leaves, as the breeze brushed by them, these sights and sounds brought quietness into Richard's heart; and even after he ceased to see and hear them, and when his thoughts no longer dwelt deliberately on them, he still felt their refreshing influence, amidst the worry and bustle of his every-day duties.

CHAPTER XI.

“Dim backward as I cast my view,
What sick’ning scenes appear.”

Burns.

“HAIL to old England !” cried Charles Dallaway, as he sprang on to the quay at Liverpool, on the 28th of November, 1851; only one year and four months from the time he left it. But no one seemed to hear him speak; no one noticed what he said; for Charles was a stranger in Liverpool, and he felt a chill come over his heart when he looked round amongst all the bustle that was going on, and saw no one that cared to speak to him; his late fellow-passengers were all looking after their own affairs, and many of them were talking to friends who were come down to welcome them. Such shaking of hands, and such kind looks, and such expressions of thankfulness there were, that the voyage was safe over. Charles felt disappointed and lonely. “And this is coming home, is it?” he said to himself; “home? why, to be sure, I’m not home yet;” *thought* he: and he was soon off from Liverpool

again, and on his way home by the first train to Southbridge. "I shall take them all by surprise at Millham," thought Charles, as he stepped into the carriage; "Johnnie won't know me, that's certain; and I wonder what I shall find Anne doing when I walk in; she'll be glad enough to see me back—particularly when she hears about the gold; and Grandmother, I feel almost afraid to think whether I shall find her living, (conscience gave a twinge at this thought;) I wouldn't have her die for all the world, before I'd paid her the money." Thoughts such as these kept hurrying through Charles's mind, as the train rushed on; its rapid pace suited well with his excited state of feeling; a few hours, and all his uncertainties will be at an end.

Charles did not feel particularly anxious that anybody should recognize him when the train stopped at the Southbridge station, considering the circumstances under which he left the neighbourhood; so he turned the collar of his great coat up to his eyes, and pulled down the ears of his travelling-cap, and drew his "comforter" over his mouth. It was night; so, as he would not run the risk of frightening them all at Millham by knocking them up at such an unseemly time, he was still obliged to endure a little delay; he could not refrain, however, as he waited at the *railway hotel*, from asking a few questions

about Southbridge and Millham ; but the people at the hotel were new comers, lately put in there by the company ; perfect strangers to the place, and could answer none of his inquiries.

How strangely the sound of bells fell on Charles's ear, in the morning ! " What's the matter," he said to the bar-maid, as he was leaving the hotel, " what's the meaning of these bells ?"

" Sunday morning—that's what it is," she answered ; " the bells always sound a few strokes at seven o'clock of a Sunday morning."

" Then," thought Charles, " Anne won't be busy to-day, and we shall have plenty of time to talk over plans together. Poor little Johnnie, how he'll wonder who I am !" said he to himself as he started on his way " home."

Charles was full of vigour ; and as he strode along, the morning air, and the beauty and the freshness of the dear old English scenery, braced up his spirits ; he was going home, too, with a resolution to make amends for the past ; and the blood bounded quickly in his veins as he trod that old familiar path across the fields to Millham. The grass was all silvered over with dew, except where the breath of the cows had brushed it away ; and the cows raised their heads one by one, and stared at him, as he passed along that *old familiar path*. Just one moment Charles

paused to rest on the last stile before he crossed the churchyard; holding back, in the fulness of his satisfaction, from the very pleasure which seemed just within reach, that he might realize the fulness of his happiness;—only a few minutes and he will be at home! Better than riches, better than getting on in the world, better than anything else, he now thinks it will be, if, after all, he can but have a happy home!

* * * * *

Let it be where it will, when did one's own name fail to catch one's eye? Poor Charles! he little expected to see the name of Dallaway on any of the grave-stones, as he sat for a minute on the stile, carelessly looking round the churchyard. "Dallaway," first struck his eye; then the Christian name, "Anne Dallaway;" and then, silently and deliberately, he read the inscription through—not as if it were anything true—but as if he were dreaming.

"ANNE DALLAWAY,
Died, July 29, A.D. 1851.
Aged 29 years."

Close by the side of this grave there was another—a little one; the osiers which swathed it over looked as if they had been there longer than those over the other grave, and there were

“~~There~~ ~~growing~~ ~~here~~ ~~and~~ ~~there~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~green~~ ~~turf~~
~~which~~ ~~covered~~ ~~the~~ ~~ground~~ ~~on~~ ~~the~~ ~~margin~~ ~~at~~ ~~the~~ ~~head~~ ~~of~~
~~the~~ ~~lake~~ ~~gave~~ ~~there~~ ~~was~~ ~~nothing~~—

—JOHN LARSEN.

THE LARK IN THE SKY.

THE LARK IN THE SKY.

THE LARK IN THE SKY.

“~~For~~ ~~the~~ ~~moment~~ ~~before~~ ~~Charles's~~ ~~thoughts~~
~~were~~ ~~a~~ ~~blank~~ ~~and~~ ~~his~~ ~~heart~~ ~~was~~ ~~full~~ ~~of~~ ~~hope~~;
~~but~~ ~~he~~ ~~knew~~ ~~he~~ ~~had~~ ~~been~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~house~~ ~~for~~
~~which~~ ~~his~~ ~~heart~~ ~~had~~ ~~yearned~~ ~~in~~ ~~a~~ ~~distant~~ ~~land~~, ~~was~~
~~gone~~—~~a~~ ~~was~~ ~~not~~ ~~there~~—~~he~~ ~~had~~ ~~no~~ ~~home~~—
~~and~~ ~~his~~ ~~heart~~ ~~had~~ ~~been~~ ~~under~~ ~~him~~—

“~~Within~~ ~~Charles~~ ~~wondered~~ ~~for~~ ~~the~~ ~~next~~ ~~hour~~
~~it~~ ~~was~~ ~~he~~ ~~little~~ ~~thought~~ ~~he~~ ~~knew~~: ~~he~~ ~~only~~ ~~tried~~
~~to~~ ~~know~~ ~~nothing~~ ~~any~~ ~~more~~: ~~his~~ ~~first~~ ~~thought~~ ~~was~~,
~~to~~ ~~go~~ ~~again~~ ~~to~~ ~~his~~ ~~grandmother's~~ ~~cottage~~, ~~but~~
~~he~~ ~~did~~ ~~not~~ ~~want~~ ~~to~~ ~~take~~ ~~her~~ ~~by~~ ~~surprise~~
~~it~~ ~~was~~ ~~his~~ ~~mother~~: ~~and~~ ~~the~~ ~~same~~ ~~year~~ ~~crossed~~ ~~him~~,
~~that~~ ~~he~~ ~~might~~ ~~be~~ ~~gone~~ ~~too~~: ~~a~~ ~~kind~~ ~~of~~
~~superstitious~~ ~~conviction~~ ~~and~~ ~~possession~~ ~~of~~ ~~him~~,
~~that~~ ~~all~~ ~~he~~ ~~ever~~ ~~loved~~ ~~were~~ ~~dead~~: ~~that~~ ~~not~~ ~~one~~ ~~of~~
~~them~~ ~~all~~ ~~was~~ ~~left~~ ~~to~~ ~~give~~ ~~him~~ ~~a~~ ~~welcome~~ ~~home~~.
~~Once~~ ~~more~~ ~~he~~ ~~must~~ ~~go~~ ~~back~~ ~~to~~ ~~the~~ ~~churchyard~~—
~~he~~ ~~must~~ ~~ask~~ ~~himself~~ ~~as~~ ~~to~~ ~~whether~~ ~~he~~ ~~had~~ ~~not~~
~~overlooked~~ ~~his~~ ~~grandmother's~~ ~~grave~~—~~he~~ ~~must~~ ~~go~~
~~back~~ ~~again~~ ~~to~~ ~~the~~ ~~churchyard~~: ~~why~~ ~~should~~ ~~he~~
~~not~~ ~~it~~ ~~was~~ ~~more~~ ~~like~~ ~~home~~ ~~to~~ ~~him~~ ~~now~~ ~~than~~ ~~any~~

other place—"where else should he go? they were all there," thought Charles.

The chimes were down—the last of all the flock was gathered within the church's fold—and Charles stole back to the churchyard; there, even as he had feared, he found another green grass grave, close beside the other two; there was no name—the stone had not been placed there yet—but Charles felt sure it was his Grandmother's; "it must be hers;" and he turned to go away into the wide world, a desolate man. But just then the sacred tones of the organ fell on Charles's ear, and he paused; and then the holy hymn rose up. Charles listened outside the door—how sweet, and calm, and holy, the sounds came from within! They chained him to the spot, and a thrill ran through him as the thought flashed on his mind, "what would it be to stand like this outside of heaven when the 'door is shut,' while all the happy and the good are safe within, singing Hallelujahs?" there he stood listening outside the door, while bitter recollections, awakened by those holy sounds, chased each other through his mind; he remembered how time after time, in days gone by, he had stood and listened on that very spot, just to pass the time away, and then had turned away to follow his own pleasure; he remembered one day in particular, on which he over-persuaded Anne, before they were mar-

ried, to go and walk with him instead of going to church ; he remembered the very words he used when he told her it was "an old-fashioned prejudice" to think it necessary to go to church every Sunday ; he remembered, too, how by degrees she learnt the lesson he taught her ; and he would have given all the world to know whether she had altered at all before she died—whether she ever went to church again ; he remembered the days that were gone, and how often he had passed by that door on a Sunday to follow his own pleasure ; but now, out of pure anguish, he longed to go in, for his poor, sad heart was empty, and it was longing for something that would satisfy and comfort it—he longed to fall down and worship, as he stood there listening outside the door, and thinking of the days that were gone.

Charles had felt this longing for something that would *satisfy* him all his life long ; and many different ways had he tried to find out what would answer best, for he was determined that, one way or another, he would "have a happy life of it ;" even when he was quite a lad he had set his heart on rising in the world ; and it was because he thought it would be more "genteel" than going out to service as his father had done before him, that he let his grandmother have no peace till, through her interest with certain influential persons in Southbridge (in whose families

she had officiated as nurse,) she had procured the promise of an "exhibition," which enabled her to send him to a commercial school, and from thence to Smith and Fincham's establishment; there, for a time, he had been delighted to see himself dressed in a good suit of clothes every day, and cutting a dash on a Sunday; but he had what he called "such an independent spirit," that though he *endured* his situation for several years, because he saw no other way of getting so good a living, he very soon grew discontented with his position in life; he was not quite *satisfied* with it; it was irksome to "a man of an independent spirit" to be employed in the service of others, helping them to get rich by the drudgery he daily went through; he must be on the look-out for something that would suit him better. Then came the travelling mercer scheme; but that was quite a failure, as far as any *satisfaction* Charles derived from it was concerned; it was such a trouble to be always travelling about, and every change of weather put him out of humour; if it rained, it was "detestable weather," and he wished he had a dry house over his head; and if the sun shone, he declared he should never be cool again; and if it was cloudy, the weather was so dull it put him out of spirits; he did not feel at all *satisfied* with that kind of life, and, after all, it was *not* the thing to suit him; how long,

or how short a time he might have carried it off grumbling away at good Richard all the while there's no telling, if the sudden idea had not taken hold of him, that a wife was what he wanted, and a house and business of his own with no master over his head. But, alas! there was very little cause for *satisfaction* in that speculation. Poor Charles! despairing of happiness in England, he hunted for it in a distant land and after many and many a disappointment, his hopes seemed likely to be gratified at last; there was gold to be had—and plenty of it—that must surely *satisfy* him.

But though Charles was tolerably successful at the gold-diggings, the gold brought care and trouble with it; by night and by day he was in constant fear of losing it; and when he had gold he looked back with a longing heart to his home; out there, alone in Australia, the gold brought him no particular happiness, but he thought he should feel more *satisfied* than ever he had before now that he had the means which would enable him to wipe off old scores, and start afresh in the world as an honest man, if he had but his wife and child to rejoice with him. And so Charles had come back to England still *unsatisfied*, and longing once more to possess the comfort of a home; longing for that home which now, alas! was beyond his reach; and still, as he stood

there listening to those holy sounds, his heart was empty and *unsatisfied*.

It is true, Charles had often felt a secret mis-giving that he had neglected the only thing which would be sure not to disappoint him ; he had neglected the Bible—he had neglected to serve God as the Bible teaches. But Charles had made up his mind that whatever the Bible might say, it *ought* to be enough to be a moral man ; and the Bible said there was something more than that necessary—that there was something to be *believed*, as well as something to be *done*. And Charles had always seemed to think that he was a better judge about what rules should be given to show a man how to get to heaven, or, in other words, about what ought to have been put in the Bible, than the One Great God whose Spirit guided the holy men who wrote it. Charles had wished to fix the standard of right and wrong, himself ; and *he* thought it ought to be enough to be a moral man ; but there was so much besides in the Bible about believing, and about being holy ; and he did not like to take the pains which a man must take to become holy ; so he took up with the saying that “ he could not believe the whole of the Bible—how could he when the Bible contradicted itself ? and told him to believe things he couldn’t understand ? ”

Poor Charles ! what wise man ever supposed

that Reason could understand, or pass judgment upon things that are beyond the province of Reason? What wise man would shrink from acknowledging that the province of Reason has its limits—and its proper objects within those limits? or would refuse to allow that belief has likewise its own province, and its peculiar objects within that province? Poor Charles! he had laid hold of the wrong tool when he went to work with his reason to try to understand things that are altogether beyond the reach of reason; and no wonder that the tool could not do the work to which he set it. Poor Charles! he wanted to measure Infinite Wisdom by his own little intellect; and he was so taken up with himself, and this small part of the Creation—the world we live in—that he never remembered that there are great and glorious beings in another and higher state of existence, (as far above mortal man, may be, as man is above the grovelling worm,) who, perhaps, find no difficulty in understanding what he called contradictions. The Bible does not require that we should *understand* everything that it contains; of many things it is only said, “believe.” And by-and-bye, in another and a better world, we, too, perhaps, shall be able to understand what is now incomprehensible; and, if not, what matter? we may still adore and *worship* where we cannot understand.

Poor Charles ! there he stood and listened ; he was beginning to feel that he had been making a great mistake all his life ; yes, he had been used to say that it ought to be enough to be a moral man, and he had never so deeply felt before, as now he felt, in the weariness and emptiness of his heart, that the only thing which could *satisfy* him was an object worthy to be worshipped, and adored, and loved.

When Charles was young he had got a notion that it would be clever and unprejudiced to try and show that he could be what he called "a fine moral character," without believing any more of the Bible than he could understand. And certainly it would have been better to be moral than immoral, particularly as far as other people were concerned, because he would not be so likely to disturb the peace of society ; but it was a pure *fancy* to think this was enough for his own safety, for he had, in fact, no more *warrant* for supposing that God would consider any life, a good life, which does not grow out of believing, than he had reason to think a flower could live without a root. Artificial flowers look very pretty, it is true, but everybody knows they are only imitations of real ones ; and moral men, who don't believe, are only respectable-looking imitations of good men that do.

Poor Charles ! he had been no wiser than his

own child, poor little Johnnie, when he used to gather daisies and butter-cups, and stick them in a little plot of ground, expecting they would go on looking as fresh as the daisies and butter-cups he left growing in the meadows unsevered from the root. And Johnnie's daisies and butter-cups would look pretty well, perhaps, for a day, if no hot sun fell upon them; but he would pull them up and cast them away the next morning because they were dead. "Why do the daisies die, father?" he used to say. "Because they have no root, Johnnie," was the only answer Charles could give his child. And just so, the life of any moral man who refuses to believe the Bible, may look fair and blameless; and if he is naturally of a gentle nature, he may be in the constant habit of doing kind actions to his fellow-creatures; and if no heat of strong temptation fall upon him, perhaps he might go on looking much the same to the end of his life (that little day which must soon end); but is there no fear that when the night of the grave is over, and the morning of the Resurrection comes, he may be cast away at last, like the dead daisies, because he had no root—no belief?

As Charles stood listening there, some thoughts like these flashed like lightning through his mind, alone, as he was, in the churchyard, with nothing *but silent graves* all round him, and the new-

found graves of those he loved so near. Silent graves they were, but yet they spoke.

The holy sounds died away on Charles's ear; and a darker shade of wretchedness and loneliness came over him as he turned away. Scarcely knowing or caring which way he went, he sauntered into the fields, and threw himself down on a bench which had been placed under a beautiful Lime tree, for the sake of the prospect around. There was a Sabbath stillness in the air, and the peaceful scene around him soothed Charles's troubled spirit, and melted his heart, and, almost unknown to himself, there were tears upon his cheek; tears which he hastily brushed away as he heard a footstep draw near.

It was Richard's favourite seat to which Charles had found his way; this seat, too, was still Richard's favourite resort on a Sunday, and the footstep which Charles heard was no other than his. Annoyed at seeing his favourite seat occupied, Richard's first impulse was to turn hastily away; but a glimpse of the unhappy face caught his eye, and he knew it, altered and wretched as it was; he had seen Charles brush the tears away too, and a recollection just glanced on his mind, of a day long past, when he himself had sat disconsolate on that same spot, with tears upon his cheek; but when he saw Charles's heart-broken look, he only remembered to forgive.—

Charles, too, had recognised Richard, and silently grasped the kind hand which he held out to him as he sat down on the bench beside him; all the coolness which had formerly existed between them being forgotten in the surprise of the moment.

Richard, in the confusion of the sudden meeting, did not remember that it was impossible Charles could have received the letters before he sailed from Australia, which Grannie had written to tell him of the death of his wife and child, and he imagined that his distress was occasioned solely by having visited their graves for the first time. He little thought, as he sat down by him, that those graves had first told Charles all that had happened, and that his grief was yet but a few hours old. Charles looked as if a blight had passed over him; nothing could so well convey an idea of his look as the appearance of a tree that has been blighted.

"Charles," said Richard, "you're not well. You can see by your looks; the foreign climate has not agreed with you; but I hope, now you come back, your native air will soon set you up."

"Don't speak kindly to me, Richard," said poor Charles; "you'll break my heart: you know I don't deserve it. If you'd blame me and tell me all my faults, and reproach me, I could stand it better;" and Charles hid his face in his hands.

"Come," said Richard, "what's past can't be undone; we used to be good friends once, and so let's be now—let's have a walk together." And Charles obeyed like a child, as, putting his arm within Charles's, Richard led him across the old familiar fields.

"I've never been a happy fellow," said Charles, "and I've almost always been disappointed whatever I've tried at; but now, I'm worse than that, and I don't mind saying it to you, for it's truth, I'm a wicked man—and a wretched man;" and he gave a groan as he spoke that went to Richard's heart.

"But you mustn't be down-hearted," Richard said; "when things come to the worst, they mend, as people say."

"But they can't mend now," Charles answered, "it's too late. I can't make amends to them that are gone, and I must always be an unhappy man now."

"Then," said Richard, plucking up courage to speak out, "when you feel like that, there's comfort not far off, depend upon it."

"Comfort!" interrupted Charles, as if he wondered what the word could mean.

"Depend upon it," repeated Richard, "there's comfort not far off; for as sure as the Bible's true, 'Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.'" Richard suddenly stopped

short, and hesitated. "I forgot! I forgot!" he said; "you used to say (God have mercy!) that you didn't believe the Bible. Oh! Charles! do you now believe the Bible?"

"Richard," answered Charles, "it's a long while since I thought anything about whether I believed it or not. I'd give the world to believe it—only give me one good reason to show me it's true," he added, in a tone of anguish.

Poor Richard! it was a serious thing to be called upon for a reason at short notice in this way; so he answered like a wise man: "If you want a learned reason, Charles, you must go to learned men; for I've heard there are plenty of reasons in learned books, for those that can come at them, and those that need them: but," said he, "I can give you the reason that satisfies myself, if that will do."

"If it satisfies *you*, why shouldn't it satisfy me, too?" said Charles, eagerly.

"I don't know that that follows," said Richard; "it used not to be like that;" for Richard remembered how much cleverer than him Charles used always to think himself.

"But, Richard, it's different now; for goodness' sake tell me what you mean."

"Why, all I know is," said Richard, "that if I'm hungry or thirsty, and the meat or drink *I get* seems to satisfy me, and do me good, I don't

want much reasoning to make me believe it's wholesome food."

"And what has that to do with what we were talking about?"

"Why; what I mean is," answered Richard deliberately—for Richard could never be hurried out of his own pace—"that if my heart feels empty, and seems to long for something to fill it—something, I mean, to worship, and something to love, (Richard's voice trembled from the earnestness and the feeling with which he spoke,) and if I find *that* in the Bible which will answer to my wants, why, I don't want much persuading to make me believe it's a true book; and if I'm unhappy any time, or disappointed (for I *have* had my troubles,) and I can find comfort there, when I can't find it any where else—I don't want much persuading to make me read it. Try it, Charles; try it; and you won't be disappointed any more than I've been."

"I *will* try," Charles said; and then he added abruptly, (for he winced when Richard spoke of his having had his troubles,) Richard, can you forgive me for an injury I did you in past years? I can't be at peace till I've asked your forgiveness; only forgive me, and tell me what I can do to show my sorrow."

"Forgive you?" that's been done long ago; surely you don't think I bear malice."

"I wish you would tell me," Charles repeated, "something that I can do to show my sorrow! don't talk any more about it now; but, perhaps, some day you'll think of something that I can do for you." And they walked on in silence.

"Charles," said Richard at last, "there's one thing I'd be glad if you'd do; if you'd come along with me where I'm going?"

"Any where you like—it's the same to me where I go."

"I'm going over to Woodleigh church to prayers this afternoon; and if you'll come too, I'll be glad of your company."

"As you've asked it, I'll do it," said Charles; "I suppose nobody will know me over there."

"And then we'll both go and drink tea with Grandmother; you know I always call her Grandmother; I learnt that of you when we used to walk over there together, years ago. She really doesn't look much altered, at least not to my judgment; but after being away so long, perhaps you may see a change."

Richard wondered that Charles gave him no answer, and he felt the hand tremble which was leaning on his arm. Charles stopped; and looking in Richard's face said, "Do you mean that my Grandmother is still living?"

"Living! to be sure she is; did you think she was dead?"

"Thank God!" said Charles; "then I was mistaken; but whose grave is that alongside of—alongside of the others?"

"You've been under some mistake, Charles; Grandmother's alive and well, and talking every day about your coming home; what day did you land?"

"I only landed yesterday afternoon," said Charles, "and came on by the first train. But if my Grandmother's still living, how is it she never wrote to tell me all that has happened? how could she let me come home unprepared to learn things in this dreadful way?"

Richard began to perceive there was something to be cleared up. "Your Grandmother did write," said he, "she told me so herself—she wrote twice. The first letter went six or seven months ago, I know; it was about the end of April; long before the letter came from you to say you were coming home."

"I sailed from Port Philip," Charles began, as if thinking aloud, "on the 27th of July, directly I came back from the diggings; of course Grandmother's first letter couldn't have reached Australia till the beginning or the middle of August—certainly not till after I left. But my head is dull, Richard. Oh! tell me what there was in those two letters! I knew nothing of what has happened till this very morning—as I crossed the churchyard."

Richard's distress was extreme. "I ought to have thought—I ought to have known," he began, "how unfeeling it must have seemed of me to be talking in the way I have. Believe me, I had no idea that you—" but Richard could not finish the sentence, and there was a painful silence for a minute or two.

"My good old Grandmother," Charles at last exclaimed; "thank God, she is not gone!"

"I must prepare her by degrees for seeing you," said Richard, "and see how she bears it; and if you'll just wait under the Lime tree after prayers are over, I'll come up and fetch you—hark! those are Woodleigh chimes!"

Softly they fell on the ear from a distance, and then swelled louder on the breeze, and then died away again.

Charles was silent, for his grief was too big for words; but when he fell on his knees in Woodleigh church, with his head bowed down, and his hands clasped on his breast, the first ray of peace and hope shone down from heaven into his broken heart.

CHAPTER XII.

"Thus, when the villain crams his chest,
Gold is the canker of the breast ;
'Tis avarice, indolence, and pride,
And ev'ry shocking vice beside ;
But when to virtuous hands 'tis given,
It blesses, like the dews of Heav'n :
Like Heaven, it hears the orphan's cries,
And wipes the tears from widows' eyes."

Gay.

If, as years pass over us, our feelings were to grow more and more acute, in proportion to our experience of the joys and sorrows of life, the sense of pain or pleasure would at length become so intense, that the balance which is so wonderfully adjusted between the mind and the body, so long as both remain in a healthy state, would be upset ; and by the time we arrived at old age, either the mind would have given way, or the frail body it inhabits would be so worn out, as to be nothing but a burden. And that this is the sad experience of many, is a painful truth. But as regards most men, a contrary process takes place. Our first sorrows crush us

as they pass over us; and we can never be again as we were before. But sorrow in old age, stirs not the depths of the soul, like sorrow in youth; either (as seems to be sometimes the case) men encourage an indifference of feeling, and succeed in acquiring a cold hardness of character; or, as in the case of the good man, a steady calmness is produced by his experience of this changeful world; as it teaches him to set his heart on things which are beyond the reach of change. And besides this, we are so constituted by nature, that even if we wished it, our feelings are not capable of retaining through life the quickness with which they were first ended.

It is no great wonder then, (to return to our story,) that whilst the sudden shock of sorrow shook, not only the inward feelings, but even the very outward frame of Charles Dallaway, so that, as was said before, he looked as if a blight had passed over him; his old Grandmother showed no great outward signs of excitement, when she heard the joyful news which Richard Morgan had been nearly afraid to tell her, of Charles's return; Richard felt a little provoked with the old lady, when he found how quietly she took such an event; and having assured himself that she was not likely to sustain any injurious effects from excess of joy, he hastened away to fetch Charles.

"God Almighty . bless thee, my child !" said Grandmother, as Charles, with a painful sense of the injury he had done her, looked anxiously in her face. Whether a face is handsome or not, we scarcely notice, if it be one we have loved in the days of our childhood ; if we loved it then, we love it through life, and the blessing of Grandmother's face looking kindly on him again, was, at that moment, almost more than Charles could bear. Richard Morgan was now angry with himself, for having imagined that want of feeling was the cause of Grannie's calmness ; and he thought he had never seen a more benevolent countenance than hers, when, as poor Charles sank down on a chair, with his face hid in his hands, she laid her own affectionately upon his head, repeating a second time as she did so, "God Almighty bless thee, my child ! You'll be tired, Charles, with such a journey as you've had, by sea and by land ; you'll be better after a bit," she said, as she hastily spread a snow-white cloth on the table, and brought forth her choicest fare ; homely it was, but still it was the best Grannie had to give.

"Grandmother," said Charles, raising his face with a look that went to her heart, "I shall never be better till I've asked your forgiveness, and made amends for the injury I've done you."

"My forgiveness is granted, Charles ; that's

easy done; and as for making amends—never mind anything about that of a Sunday. It's true I've had a hard matter to get along sometimes, but the Lord's been very good to me, for He's never forsook me. And since Mr. Morgan here came to lodge with me, I've been better off."

"Morgan, are you lodging with Grandmother?" said Charles; but he spoke like a man that asks questions, without caring for the answer.

"I have been lodging here till you came; we thought you would have given us notice; but I'm ready to turn out now you are come."

"No cause for that, Mr. Morgan, no cause for that," Grannie began; "mine's a four-roomed cottage, there's room for all."

Charles had not yet tasted food that day; and even in grief the necessities of nature will make themselves felt; so he ate and was refreshed; and Richard, with his innate delicacy of feeling, having withdrawn, Charles now begged his Grandmother to give him an exact relation of all that had happened; he inquired the day of Anne's death, and little Johnnie's; and explained to Grannie how he had missed of both her letters.

Deep and long was the talk between Charles and his Grandmother; and when Richard afterwards rejoined them, he found Charles calmer

than before, though in deep dejection. Nor was Richard's presence unwelcome; for there was a silent sympathy in his manner, which soothed, without being oppressive, as is sometimes the case, when sympathy is talkative.

But even in spite of his grief, Charles's thoughts in a few days returned to the one subject which had weighed on his mind since the time of his leaving England, and to the one object which had nerved his arm in labouring at the gold-diggings; and it was a happy moment to him when, having repaid Grannie, he tore up the note of hand he had given her, when she lent him the hundred and fifty pounds. "The only thing I can do now, is to show my sorrow for doing wrong," thought Charles, "by doing right." This one thought seemed to have taken possession of him; it was, in fact, the only thought that brought him any comfort; the only thought that gave him courage to face the world again, and helped him to bear up before the bleak prospect he now had to contemplate, of beginning life over again. Cheering moments they were to Charles when he sought out all his old creditors, and wiped off the old scores in their books, and the old stains on his character; his mind was lightened of a load; and now, being no longer occupied with other things, his thoughts began habitually to wander back to former times; and

the loss of his wife and child became more and more acutely felt. In Australia, amidst new scenes and new occupations, he had not missed them so much as now; and when he used to think of them it was always in connexion with England; but now, to be back in England, and to miss their welcome, was a sorrow which seemed to grow more and more real every day he lived.

We may get the shadow of an idea of what Charles felt when we remember the pleasure with which we bestow, and seem to receive a kind of silent greeting, even from inanimate objects and dumb animals, when we return to old scenes after long absence; and the vexation we experience when we find things changed; and even to objects such as these, Charles too now turned, as if he would get comfort out of them. "I think Grannie," he said one evening, "the ticking of the old clock in the corner makes me feel as much at home as anything;" and looking round to the other side of the room, he continued, "but what's become of the thrush? I recollect he always used to hang just opposite the clock."

Grannie shook her head as if she hardly liked to answer. "Poor fellow—he's dead," she said at last, "he've been dead these six weeks—and nobody knows how I've missed him; but he never was like the same bird after Johnnie died;

for Johnnie used to come regular every day to feed him—and then he'd sing till you might hear him all over Millham; but I take it he missed Johnnie, for he never sung a note after he was gone—and he seemed to pine, and he wasn't like the same bird he was; and one morning when I came to feed him, there he lay dead at the bottom of the cage; it was foolish of me, but I know it fetched the tears to my eyes."

And Grandmother's story "fetched the tears" to Charles's eyes; and he hastily rose and went out; the thoughts of little Johnnie came back over him more freshly than ever, as he remembered the child's love for the favourite thrush.

But Charles's feelings had to sustain a far sorer trial than this, and others like to it; nay, something beyond his feelings was touched; for remorse, long and deep, was the result. As Grannie was one day hunting in a drawer for something (some week's after Charles's return—it was one of the short, dark days before Christmas,) her eye fell on the letter which Anne had begun to Charles that evening when she fainted away, only a few hours before her death. In the confusion and anxiety of that evening Grandmother had folded up this letter and put it away, never thinking of it again, till it now accidentally caught her eye; and as she remembered the circumstances under which it was written, she almost feared to

give it to Charles; "and yet," she said to herself, "I've no right to keep back her last words from him; there my dear," she said to him at last, "that letter was written, as I may say, with poor Anne's dying hand; I don't know what there's in it, for I knew it wasn't meant for my eyes—but she wrote it only a few hours afore she died; indeed, I may say, death struck her as she was writing, for she fell back in a fainting fit, and the pen dropped from her hand; it was the last thing that ever she did in this world, and she seemed as if she'd set her heart on writin' it."

There was a kind of tremulous joy in the eager manner with which Charles held out his hand for the letter. A welcome from Anne's living voice he could never hear; but this was something like Anne speaking to him again—Anne's own words to him, and her last words. Endeavouring to conceal the excitement of his feelings, Charles put the letter in his pocket, saying he was going out for a walk, and would read it out of doors. And, once outside the cottage door, Charles walked with rapid steps far away from the dwellings of men, to a retired spot where he would not be liable to interruption, where he paused; and having opened the letter, read as follows:—

"My dear Charles,

"July 28, 1851.

"As I feel so much better this afternoon, I take up my pen to write to you, though, to be sure, you don't know I'm ill, which I have been a long time past; the doctor says I shan't get over it, but I don't think he understands my case. A time ago I did think so myself, for it seemed so long to wait without a line from you, and so I got quite out of heart. I ought to have written to you before, only I couldn't make up my mind to write and tell you about our poor Johnnie, so got Grandmother to write instead; but now you talk about coming home, I won't put off any longer, because there's a great many things I've got to say, and some that I would rather say now you are far off, than when you come home. The thoughts of your coming home seem almost too good to be true, and have done me more good already than all the doctor's stuff I've been taking. I have known a great deal of trouble, and I may say, want, since you went away, though I have strived my best to do as you said, and keep on the business. But it was of no use my trying, and at last I was obliged to go into lodgings, where I got on worse still; and though I did what I could to set out the window of the sitting-room to the best advantage, of course it didn't look like the sort of front we'd been used to. And then when Johnnie died, I seemed quite lost. Oh, Charles! I wish you could have seen him how sweet he looked after all was over, when Grandmother strewed the flowers over him—those little white flowers, with slender stalks, that poor Johnnie used to get down in the wood;* and then she put a bunch of that little shining golden flower, 'just like a star' Johnnie used to say it was†—in his blessed little white hand. Grannie said they ought to have been all white

* The Wood Anemone.

† The little *Celandine*.

flowers by rights, only she couldn't help putting them in his blessed little hand, because he used to be so fond of them. ("Oh, my little Johnnie!" sobbed Charles; "my own dear little child! my own—my only child!" His eyes were so blinded with tears that he could not see to read, and he sobbed for a good while before he could go on with the letter, which continued as follows.) "I don't know what would have become of me if it had not been for Grandmother and Mrs. Clarke, the doctor's wife, who has been a most astonishing friend to me, as well as old Mr. Smith. Mrs. Clarke and Grandmother have greatly persuaded me to see the clergyman since I came to live at Grandmother's (which I do now,) and, indeed, I feel a great wish to see him myself; but I knew that was not what you would approve of, and therefore I refused—though I think they thought it strange. If I could have said my prayers at home when Johnnie died, I think I should have done that, for I seemed to have no comfort in me, though I know you didn't use to think saying prayers was much good. But it was of no use for me to try, for I didn't seem to know how, having left off so long; and my heart seemed as much like a stone as any thing else; and, as I said, when they wanted me to see the clergyman I refused to do it, particularly considering I've not been used to go to church for so long.

"And now, Charles, I hope you won't be angry, but that's one thing I have been wanting to speak to you about; for now I'm so ill, and the doctor thinks, perhaps, I shall never get over it, I often think how much I should like to begin and go to church again, if ever I get better, which I can't help thinking I shall, now you are coming home. And it isn't only since you've been gone I've been thinking of it; for, very often, when the bells went, I *seemed* as if I longed to go to church; only, when you

were at home, I never got courage to say it, because I thought, perhaps, we should fall out over it if I spoke my mind. But now, dear Charles, I hope you won't refuse what I've got to ask, and that is, that when you come home you and I should begin and go to church. You know, Charles, I always was used to go to church; only when you over-persuaded me to give it up, I had not got the courage to refuse, and I can't help thinking if we could begin all over again when you come back, that things would not go so contrary with us. I'm afraid you'll be very angry with me when you read this, but—" . . .

These last words of Anne's were a bitter draught for Charles; and the more he thought of them, the keener was his self-reproach. It is, to many, a painful reflection in after years, to have persuaded a fellow-creature to act against his conscience, even though he may still be living, and all may have been done that could be done to make amends for the past. But it is an agonizing thought, when the hand of death has put it out of our power to make any atonement to those whom we have led astray; when, however bitterly we may repent ourselves, repentance is no longer possible for them.

If Charles could have consulted some wise, good man, he might have found some comfort, so far as Anne was concerned, in hearing how great reason there is to hope that God will count those things as done, where the will is right, and opportunity alone is wanting to the performance :

he might have been comforted by hearing that there was hope of pardon for Anne, since she sorrowed sincerely for the past, and desired earnestly to begin again in a right direction; he might have been comforted, too, by the hope of pardon for himself, since time was still given him to repent: but even this shadow of comfort Charles did not feel, and he did nothing but load himself with reproaches, as he dwelt on the recollection that he had persuaded Anne to act in opposition to her conscience, and that it was now beyond his power to make restitution.

It was long after dark, and with a haggard countenance, that Charles at last returned to his Grandmother's cottage. Richard Morgan had already said "good night" to Grannie, and she was sitting by the light of the fire, watching for "her boy" to come home, (for, forgetful of the lapse of time, she still occasionally bestowed this appellation upon Charles, though he could not now be less than four-and-thirty;) she thought, when the light of the fire fell on Charles's face as he entered, that he looked what she called "strange." Charles, however, gave her no time for asking questions, but, sitting down by her, he began abruptly, "Grandmother, I wish you would teach me how to be good, the same as you did when I was a child. I don't know what's to become of me if you don't. I've got no comfort

in my heart, Grannie, and it is so long since I thought anything about such things, I don't know which way to begin." If it had been broad daylight, or even if there had been candles burning, perhaps Charles would not have said so much; but who does not know how greatly that indistinct light shed over the room by the fire assists a confidential conversation?

"And how am I to teach a grown man like you, Charles? I thought you were a'most too clever for me to teach now!"

"Don't, Grannie, don't say so; I know I used to talk as if being clever was all one wanted to find the right way; but I don't think I've ever found it out yet."

"Nor I don't think, my dear, bein' clever have much to do with it; I don't know what's to become of poor ignorant creatures like me, else; and more than that," Grannie added, lowering her voice, "I *have* heard say there aren't no cleverer creatures than the devils themselves."

"Ah," said Charles, as if talking to himself, "I used to say I didn't believe there were such beings as devils, nor such a place as hell! I couldn't bear to believe it, no more I can now; though that's no reason, either, why it shouldn't be true. But, Grannie, I mean what I say; will you tell me what it was you used to teach me when I was a child? I've forgotten it all!"

"My dear, I don't know anything there is to tell, no more than to say your Belief night and mornin'; and then, when you've told over anything you've done wrong, to ask pardon, and whatever else you want; and then, of course, the Lord's Prayer."

"Ah, that's all easy enough to you, Grandmother."

"And it'll come easy to you, too, in time, Charles; if you'll only kneel down and clasp your hands, and persevere;" and presently she added, looking in his face, "and couldn't you read a chapter sometimes, Charles?"

"Grannie, if I try to read the Bible, I feel all lost, I tell you. I don't know where to begin, nor what to read first."

"And no wonder," said the old lady, "if it's what you have'nt been used to; but I'd begin first and just read only those parts that are put in the Prayer-Book."

Grannie went to a drawer, and unfolded a handkerchief in which something was carefully wrapt up. "There, my dear," she said, "that's your own Prayer-Book, I knew you'd be wantin' it again some day;" and turning to the end of the book, she pointed to the hymn called "The Lamentation of a Sinner," (said to have been composed by Anne Boleyn;) and as she put it into Charles's hand, "There," she said,

"I think I was down on my knees above a quarter of an hour, just as poor Anne lay at last, readin' that over and over to her, and when I'd finished, she seemed to want to have it over again."

"That would suit *me*, Grannie, I think," said Charles as he read the title; and holding his finger in the place he added, "when I go to bed, I'll look it over."

A long pause followed, and at last Charles began, "Grannie, I've been thinking what the real reason was, at the bottom of all the others I used to talk so much about, why I used to say I didn't believe the Bible—can you guess?"

"How should I guess such a thing as that?" Grannie answered.

"Well, then, it was *because I didn't like* to believe it, and if I said I did believe it, I thought I should be forced to live better than I did—and that's the truth."

"It was a very bad reason, wasn't it, my dear?"

"It was not the best reason in the world, Grannie; but now I suppose you want to go to bed: where's Morgan?"

"He's an early bird in the mornin', and he've been to bed this hour," said Grannie; "have he told you all about his misfortunes?"

"What, Morgan? what misfortunes? he doesn't look like an unfortunate man!"

"He have had a great misfortune, and have

lost every penny he had in the world; and Grannie went through the history of Hardman's dishonesty, to which Charles listened with breathless interest. "But," said Grannie, "I never saw such a brave man in my life, he don't seem a bit daunted; and he's come to lodge with me for cheapness, to try and put a little by again, as he says, against sickness, or bein' out of employment."

Charles, however, was so much taken up with his own misfortunes, and so oppressed by the weight of all that was on his conscience, that although he was roused for a little while by hearing of Richard's trouble, his thoughts soon recurred, after a few days, to their former channel; he looked ten years older than he was, with his wrinkled, care-worn brow; it "went pretty nigh to break Grannie's heart, to see him look so broken-down-like;" and many were the arts she tried to win him from himself.

"Now tell us, Charles," she began one evening, "tell us some of the wonderful things you've seen in foreign parts, and about the Diggings."

"Ah, Grannie, if it hadn't been for the weight I had on my mind, and a certain plan that I had in my head when I went to the Diggings, I never could have persevered through all as I did." Grannie looked inquiringly at him. "Ah," he continued, with a deep sigh, "it's all vanished *and gone* now; but my thought was then, as the

mercery line seemed just at that time to answer better than any other, to go and have a good dig at once, and bring enough away to get me into partnership with somebody in that line of business, out there;—that's to say, after I'd come home and paid my debts. And I know you'll believe me when I say, it wasn't for myself alone I thought when I fixed on this plan. But," said Charles, with a mournful shake of his head, "there's an end of all that now."

"And I suppose it's a secret how much you got?" said Grannie.

"Why, Grannie, between you and me, I was one of the lucky ones; and I've got an awkward sum left now that I don't know what to do with. You and I'll have a snug little home together any how, Grannie; we won't part any more now, will we?"

And Grannie wiped her eyes and blessed him.

"I was thinking," said Charles, "that perhaps good old Mr. Smith would give me some advice about what would be best to do with what little I've got left. I shouldn't mind calling on him now I've paid all my debts."

"Mr. Smith's ill," said Richard.

"But Mr. Smith's always supposed to be ill; there's no end to waiting for him to get well."

"He really is ill this time, though," said Richard Morgan.

"But now," said the old lady, returning to the charge, "can't you tell us anything about the Diggings, Charles?"

"I could tell you a good many things you wouldn't much like to hear, Grannie. I'd sooner sweep a crossing than I'd go through it again. But I'll tell you now something that happened to myself once."

And Grannie settled herself in her arm-chair to hear Charles's adventure.

"I had been at the Diggings about a month or five weeks," said Charles, "and it began to be suspected, no doubt, that I had had pretty good luck; for though it was the custom out there, with most of us, to be very sullen and silent, and unwilling to talk of what we'd got, it generally got wind somehow when a man had luck. Well, one night after I'd made an unusual good dig, I felt very fidgetty, as you'll believe, and so done-up I was that I couldn't get to sleep for hours, and kept on fancying I heard somebody creeping about close to the tent, as soft as a cat. Well, I suppose I dozed off at last, but I couldn't have been asleep long, when some noise woke me up; and when I opened my eyes (it was just between light and dark,) there I saw a man's hand, with a pistol in it, just poked through the tent;"— a sudden rap at the door made Grannie jump as if *she'd* been shot; there was really a man's hand, too,

poked in at the opening door—a great big hand it was, with something in it. Grannie could think about nothing but pistols. Charles rushed to the door—it was only the postman's hand after all, with a letter in it—a letter for Richard Morgan. “Who *could* it be from?” thought Grannie.

“Read your letter, Richard,” said Charles, “I can finish my story another time.”

So Richard read his letter; and when he had finished it, he read it through again, and then he pushed it across the table to Charles, saying at the same time, “A particularly bad style of joke I call that—I can’t conceive how any one can find amusement in making game of other people’s misfortunes!” and Grannie looked at Richard, trying to guess what it could be all about, and then at Charles, who was likewise some time reading this perplexing document, which was written, as Grannie could see, in a uniform, stiff-looking hand from beginning to end.

At last Charles began, as he pushed the letter across the table again to Richard, “Really I don’t see what there is to do but to wish you joy. I don’t see any joke in it.” And Grannie looked more puzzled than ever.

“Grannie,” said Charles, “there’s a letter from a lawyer to tell Richard that old Mr. Smith’s dead at last, and has left all he has to Richard Morgan—only he won’t believe it’s true.”

"Nor I don't think it's likely either," said the old lady; "though," she added presently, "now I think of it, he certainly had no near relations of his own."

"I don't believe a word of it," said Richard; "and I shan't answer the letter—it's only written just to tease me about Hardman, and all that business—it's all a forgery."

Charles Dallaway, however, without consulting Richard, took an opportunity of calling on the lawyer to make inquiries; and the lawyer laughed most heartily when he heard that Richard took his letter for a forgery, and explained to Charles that he had been with Mr. Smith only a few days before his death: as, in consequence of his having survived near relations to whom he had formerly willed his property, it became necessary for him to make an entirely new will; and, said the lawyer, "These were the very words the kind old man made use of at the time: 'I believe,' said he, 'it has been the greatest pleasure I have felt through life to help the unfortunate; and as I have now no nearer ties, it would be a comfort to me, as my last act, to compensate to Mr. Morgan for the great losses which I understand he sustained by that unhappy man, Hardman; and to show, at the same time, how great an admiration I have always felt for that *young man's* character.'—These were his very

words," said the lawyer, "as near as I can recollect."

It was a happy errand to carry back this joyful news to Richard; there was no doubt of the truth of it now; and Richard's heart overflowed in secret with gratitude to God, and to his kind old benefactor, and with love for the friends who rejoiced with him in his good fortune. "You'll be too grand now, Mr. Morgan, to come and see me," said Grannie, not that Grannie thought so in her heart, but she used to say so now and then, for the pleasure of hearing Richard contradict her, as they sat together of an evening round the little mahogany table, laying out plans for the future.

Richard, however, was often obliged to be out of an evening now, closeted with Mr. Fincham upon business, (for Mr. Smith had made Mr. Fincham his executor;) anybody else would have got through it in half the time, but Mr. Fincham had a desperate habit of stopping to make a long parenthesis now and then, about his own past experience, and his maxims, and so on, and he told Richard so often that "commerce is the best gold mine," that there was no chance of his ever forgetting it.

In the course of these transactions it transpired that Mr. Fincham intended to give up business now

that his old friend and partner, Mr. Smith, was gone, as he could never expect to "move so agreeably" with any one else; and he threw out some very broad hints that Richard would find it a good speculation to take to an old established business of this kind, unless he had other views as to the disposal of his newly-found property.

Richard turned over the idea in his mind, but would not give Mr. Fincham an answer till he had consulted Charles about a certain plan he had in his head (just like one of Mr. Smith's own,) which he thought would not only give Charles the opportunity he was wanting, of investing his gold in some safe way, but would give him occupation at the same time, and withdraw his thoughts from dwelling too constantly on painful subjects.

"Grannie, where's Charles?" said Richard, as full of his project he opened the cottage door one evening on his return from a long conference with Mr. Fincham.

"Charles is out, and more's the pity," said Grannie; "I don't half like his looks. He's up at the churchyard now I'll be bound. Folks tell me he's there all times; and, says Mrs. Price to me the other day, I didn't ought to let him go mopin' there as he does—but he *will* go, and who's to hinder him?"

But Charles was not "moping" when he stood

lost in thought, as he often did, by the graves of his wife and child. He found more peace there than anywhere else ; a peace that dawned from sorrow. He had forced himself to look his own sins in the face—to look over his past life ; he studied his own character, and learnt at last to know himself. He learnt to endure the humbling sense that his own character had been a most imperfect one ; and though almost despairing sometimes of ever being fit to live in heaven, he used his *reason* now in arguing himself out of these fits of despondency, and in deciding upon certain things that he would do (extremely disagreeable things to his naturally proud nature,) the doing of which would be the only satisfying proof to himself that his sorrow was sincere. This very evening, as Richard had sought him to propose a future plan of life to him, Charles was resolving upon a very different one for himself, whilst he stood, where Grannie guessed he was, by Anne's and Johnnie's graves.

The next morning as Charles took up his hat and went out, Richard followed him. " Charles, a word with you," he said ; and he put his arm kindly within Charles's, adding, " there's a favour you can do me, if you will."

" That's singular," answered Charles, " for I was trying to pluck up courage to ask a favour of you, Richard."

— But you shall hear what I've got to say first, Charles. Don't you see, if it's really true that I've come into Mr. Smith's property, as I begin to believe it is, I think I can't do better than follow Fincham's advice, and keep my money invested in the old shop, the same as Mr. Smith did himself: and what I want is, to go and live over at Rose Villas myself, if I could just persuade you to put what you've got left into the concern, and so be partner in the business, and live on the premises; then I should be easy to think there was somebody trustworthy always on the spot."

— Richard, stop; no, that I never will! just think, just look at what you've been, and what I've been! and then, do you think it would seem fair, and what should be, for us two to stand before the world together as if there was no difference between us? No, no; never, Richard, never!"

"But," urged Richard, "it's good for no man to be without occupation, and—"

"That's true, and what I feel myself; and the favour I was going to ask, Richard, was, that if you should be thinking of keeping on the business, you would give me a situation in the shop." This was the bitter but wholesome draught which Charles had prescribed to himself as a punishment (and he hoped, a cure) for his pride; and the very effort it had cost him to make the *proposal* brought some comfort with it; he felt

sure now that he was sincere. He used to think some years ago, he was demeaning himself by standing behind the counter at Smith and Fincham's; but trouble had taught him to know himself.

Richard now exclaimed in his turn, "Never, Charles! you shall never be *man*, where I am master! It hurts my feelings; I wish you wouldn't talk in that way." And again Richard urged his own plan, and stated that he did not care how small the sum was which Charles invested, (thinking he might feel some hesitation on that head;) but all in vain.

"We'll talk of it again this time seven years," said Charles; "but for that time at least I wish, with your permission, to serve in the shop."

Richard found that it would be kinder to consent, at least for a time, to the plan Charles had laid down for himself; resolving in secret that by some means he would try before long to overcome his resolution; and so it was settled; and Charles found to his surprise, that in spite of the trial it was to him at first, particularly when he saw such people as Mrs. Price and Mrs. Bolton nudging each other's elbows and whispering about him on the other side of the counter, there was a feeling of quietness and rest in his heart he had never felt before.

And so things went on; great changes were

taking place in Charles's character; though no events marked the lapse of time as it passed over him; till at the end of three years Richard, who had become sincerely attached to Charles, could no longer endure to see him in a situation inferior to his own, and again urged his old proposal on him. And not this time in vain; Charles had tested his resolution now; he felt less undeserving of Richard's kindness, and so with a little of Grannie's persuasion, he thankfully accepted Richard's offer.

When the news got about in Southbridge, that Mr. Morgan had taken Charles Dallaway into partnership, great was the gossip of the town about it; and a few ill-natured people, who had long ago condemned Charles as "a good-for-nothing spendthrift, who would come to no good in the end," felt almost disappointed that their prophecies were not fulfilled. It was impossible to look at Charles without seeing he was a different man; his unquiet eye was quiet now, and "the restless man" had found rest at last. Not that Charles was free from sorrow; there was always a sorrow for the past at his heart; and still he often shed a bitter tear when he passed the graves of his wife and child. But he did not stop now, as once he used to do, on the outside of the church-door. Sunday after Sunday found *him on his knees in church*, for there he always

found comfort as he confessed his sins, and heard God's own minister pronounce the merciful message of pardon to "all them that truly repent, and unfeignedly believe His Holy Gospel."

Poor Grannie, she was getting a very old lady now, but she always said these were the happiest days of her life "now she and her boy lived comfortable together again;" and perhaps it was not the least of her pleasures, to take a walk sometimes on the sunny side of the street, and read in large letters over the door of the principal mercer's establishment in Southbridge, (so large that she said she "could see to read 'em without spectacles,") the old familiar names of "Morgan and Dallaway."

THE END.

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